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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 6, 2021, at 12 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2021

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, in these challenging days, our hearts are steadfast toward You. Empower our lawmakers to grasp Your firm hand, depending on You to lead them through the darkness to the light.

Lord, lead them safely to the fortress of Your choosing, for You desire to give them a future and a hope. Provide our Senators with the power to do Your will as they more fully realize that they are servants of Heaven and stewards of Your gifts. May they make integrity the litmus test by which they evaluate each action as You keep them from deviating from Your chosen path.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, August 4, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LUJÁN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3684, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3684) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer (for Sinema) amendment No. 2137, in the nature of a substitute.

Carper-Capito amendment No. 2131 (to amendment No. 2137), to strike a definition.

Carper (for Johnson) amendment No. 2245 (to amendment No. 2137), to prohibit the cancellation of contracts for physical barriers and other border security measures for which funds already have been obligated and for which penalties will be incurred in the case of such cancellation and prohibiting the use of funds for payment of such penalties.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following Senator KELLY's maiden speech, that Senators JOHNSON, PETERS, and CARPER be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each prior to the start of the vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 3684

Mr. President, for information of the Senators, the vote scheduled at 12:15 will likely begin closer to 12:30 p.m.

As you have seen, as America has seen, the Senate is moving full steam ahead on the bipartisan infrastructure bill. Since the legislative text of the bill was finalized, the Senate has considered eight amendments. Five amendments were led by Senators from the Republican minority, and seven amendments have received rollcall votes. One amendment offered by the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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uncommon pairing of Senators WARNOCK and CRUZ was adopted yesterday by voice vote. Miracles happen even here in the Senate.

So the Senate is making great progress on amendments, and we are going to make further progress very soon. While the specific number of additional amendments has yet to be agreed to, I believe we can consider another substantial tranche on the floor today. Senators should expect multiple rollcall votes this afternoon.

EVICTION MORATORIUM

Mr. President, yesterday afternoon, millions of American families were able to breathe a sigh of relief as the Biden administration announced an extension of the eviction moratorium that expired last month.

According to the CDC, the new ban on evictions will apply for 60 days across regions of the country that are experiencing high levels of COVID infections. In total, roughly 90 percent of American renters—90 percent—will be protected by this order. That is what the head of the CDC told me yesterday.

There are so many individuals who helped make this happen. First, I applaud the President—President Biden—and the CDC for taking action to protect American families. I want to commend Speaker PELOSI. She and I worked closely together to get this done from our first conversations with the President at the White House on Thursday, on through the weekend and the beginning of this week.

But I also want to recognize the amazing courage of my colleagues, including Representatives OCASIO-CORTEZ, JONES, and GOMEZ and, above all, Representative CORI BUSH.

Congresswoman BUSH knows what it is like to be evicted. She knows the pain and fear and indignity of being told to get your things and get out. When you lose your home, you lose everything. It is hard to get to a job if you have it.

What do the kids do about school? What if there is a local clinic taking care of somebody with a healthcare problem?

You lose your home and that is it. The roof, literally and figuratively, falls in.

Well, Congresswoman BUSH has known this through her own experience, and she took her passion and converted it into effective action. I salute to her. It is a moment of history that shows when you persist, you can get things done. For four nights, she slept on the steps of the Capitol, drawing attention to this issue in a way we rarely see from a Member of Congress. She made yesterday's announcement possible. So amazing credit lies with Congresswoman BUSH and the Americans who joined her in her righteous cause.

And, of course, I want to give real credit as well to Senator BROWN, our chairman of the Banking Committee, who worked hard on this issue along with Senator WARREN and many others in the Senate.

While yesterday's announcement by the CDC was very welcome, it is only the first step. In the weeks ahead, the administration must continue working with State governments to better distribute emergency rental assistance that Congress has appropriated at the end of the last year. The money is there. We in Congress provided it.

I want to call out my State of New York, which has done a poor job at distributing this money. Two weeks ago, along with housing advocates, I called on the State to move things more quickly. A week before that, New York State along with South Carolina were the only two States that sent out no dollars—no dollars. Some of our localities that didn't cede the money to the State have done a better job, like Monroe County, where Rochester is. But too much of the money is just sitting up there in Albany.

We need Mike Hine, who is head of the relevant administrative department in the State, and all of the State to get that money out fast.

An eviction ban is a good thing. It prevents people from being kicked out of their homes. Once the eviction ban ends, if there is not rental assistance, we are back in the same boat. We need the States to get that money out.

State governments—my State of New York—must do a better job of getting that support out the door and into the hands of Americans who need help.

One other thing, there is not Treasury bureaucracy in the way. States like Texas, like Monroe County, have been able to get out a lot of the money. The fault lies in the State governments that are not doing this, and they have to move.

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE

Mr. President, on another matter, AUMF. Today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will vote on the repeal of the authorization for the use of military force in Iraq. This authorization was initially passed by Congress in 2002, 19 years ago. It has far outlived its usefulness.

The Iraq war has been over for nearly a decade. An authorization passed in 2002 is no longer necessary in 2021. It has been nearly 10 years since this particular authorization has been cited as a primary justification for a military operation, and there is a real danger to letting these legal authorities persist indefinitely. Allowing an authorization for military force to just lie around forever is an invitation to a future administration to use it for any military adventurism in the region. Americans, frankly, are sick of endless wars in the Middle East.

Congress simply has to exert more authority over matters of war and peace, as we all know the Constitution prescribes. So, this morning, I reiterate my strong support for the repeal of the 2002 authorization of military force in Iraq. I urge the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, under the able leadership of Chairman MENENDEZ, to advance the measure to the floor.

I want to thank Chairman MENENDEZ, Senator Kaine, and every Republican cosponsor of the bill for working to bring this issue to the floor.

As majority leader, in consultation with Chairman MENENDEZ, I intend to bring up the repeal for a vote on the Senate floor later this year. Members should be on notice: We are going to vote on this.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Now, Mr. President, finally, judicial nominations. One of our most important jobs here in the Senate is to confirm President Biden's judicial appointments. The Democratic majority in the Senate is committed to swiftly and consistently filling judicial vacancies with highly qualified, ideologically mainstream, and professionally and demographically diverse jurists. Later this week, the Senate will have the opportunity to confirm another judge who meets all three of these criteria.

Last night, I filed cloture on the nomination of Eunice Lee to serve on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Since the Second Circuit covers my home State of New York and is one of the most important Federal courts in the country, it was my honor to have recommended Ms. Lee to the White House for an appointment. She will be the fourth circuit judge confirmed in the first 7 months of the Biden administration.

Eunice Lee is not only an excellent lawyer, with sound judgment and a jurist's temperament, but she brings the kind of legal experience that is all too rare on the Federal bench. Ms. Lee spent her entire career in public service, representing criminal defendants who could not afford counseling. Once confirmed, she will be the only former Federal defender among the active judges on the Second Circuit.

When I met her, I saw what a caring, compassionate, thoughtful woman she was, and I was so glad—so glad—to recommend her to the White House, who quickly agreed and has sent her name forward.

Perhaps the highest compliment paid to Ms. Lee came from a group of over 70 former Federal prosecutors from New York. These are the folks who most often found themselves on the opposite side of Ms. Lee in a courtroom. They called her a "brilliant, accomplished advocate, who is supremely well qualified to serve on the bench."

She is a model. She is a model in diversity. You know, we don't have very many people of color on our Second Circuit Court of Appeals. I am trying to increase that with the nomination of Ms. Lee—Ms. Perez as well. Not only is she from a diverse background demographically, but she is diverse professionally. To have someone who has been a Federal defender up there on the Second Circuit will really expand the breadth and width and depth of knowledge that that bench has.

So I am proud to have recommended her, and I am looking forward to confirming this nominee later this week.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning, the Appropriations Committee considered a first partial batch of government funding bills for next year.

I want the Senate to secure bipartisan appropriations through the regular process. I want us to fund the government in an orderly fashion just like the successful Appropriations Committee work we saw throughout Republicans' recent years in the majority.

We accomplished that because we built a truly bipartisan process. Importantly, it began at the beginning. Early in the calendar year, we convened bipartisan talks to produce top-line numbers so the appropriators would have actual targets. That let good-faith bipartisan conversations happen at the subcommittee and committee levels throughout the spring and summer, and we got results on a bipartisan basis.

Unfortunately, this year, our Democratic colleagues haven't done anything like that. Either our colleagues don't have any big-picture plan or they are privately working off the President's partisan budget request. There has been no big-picture, bipartisan conversation. The Democrats didn't even let the committee vote on top-line allocations, which normally happens at the start of a markup.

Our colleagues' fixation on far-left shiny objects is distracting them from basic governance. They are more focused on ramming through another reckless, inflationary taxing-and-spending spree than ensuring we avoid a stalemate over government funding.

Now, look, I understand and I appreciate that Senators on both sides have worked hard to develop appropriations titles with a lot of good content. The problem is bigger picture. When it comes to floor consideration, we cannot and will not start planting individual trees before we have bipartisan consensus on the shape of the forest.

Here is what it will take to get a Senate appropriations process back on track, two—two—simple things.

No. 1, Democrats will need to honor the longstanding bipartisan truce that provides parity for defense and non-defense spending growth—parity for defense and nondefense spending growth—and at a responsible overall number that we can all accept. Our men and women in uniform and the Nation they defend deserve better than a

budget that cuts our national defense after inflation and allows adversaries to get an edge.

No. 2, we must have agreement that we are going to keep longstanding bipartisan policy riders in and new poison pill riders out. We need to keep foundational mainstays, like the Hyde amendment, right where they are, and neither side should throw new wrenches into the process.

Parity for national and border security and a bipartisan deal on policy riders—this is not rocket science; it is a roadmap. We all know it very, very well. That is what it will take to move bipartisan appropriations bills across this floor, but the majority is behind on the homework.

AFGHANISTAN

Now, Mr. President, on a totally different matter, in April, when President Biden announced his intention to pull U.S. forces out of Afghanistan, he said it was "time to end the forever wars"—"time to end the forever wars," said President Biden, but at every stage of the rushed and rudderless retreat that has followed, the Biden administration's wishful thinking hasn't come within a country mile of reality. By any account, the situation in Afghanistan has become worse as we have headed to the exits, and we will live with the security, humanitarian, and moral consequences for years to come.

This whole debacle was not only foreseeable; it was, in fact, foreseen. Remember what top national security experts were saying around the time the President announced his decisions:

The Taliban is likely to make gains on the battlefield, and the Afghan Government will struggle to hold the Taliban at bay if the coalition withdraws support.

Administration officials shrugged it off. They downplayed the chances that Afghanistan's pro-American government would fall to the pro-terrorist Taliban, but now that outcome appears all but inevitable.

The administration literally glossed over the risk of an al-Qaida resurgence, but now Secretary Austin is acknowledging al-Qaida could reestablish a safe haven and threaten the homeland in less than 2 years—that is the Secretary of Defense—and even that could be optimistic.

They insisted that over-the-horizon operations would be enough to keep terrorists in check, but now, just as the CIA Director warned from the start, intelligence gathering is already suffering.

The administration claimed that resources tied up in the fight against terrorists were more urgently needed to counter Chinese aggression, but now the manpower demands of this over-the-horizon approach have required redeployment of forces to the Middle East and pulled an entire carrier group away—away—from China's backyard so it can conduct costlier, less-efficient, long-range missions over Afghanistan from the Gulf.

Much of the rhetoric from the President's team has sounded almost laugh-

ingly—laughingly—naive. The Secretary of State publically suggested he thinks he can bribe the Taliban into being a responsible, peaceful regime with diplomatic carrots. So that is where we are.

In 6 months, this administration has taken us from helping local partners fight the Taliban to abandoning our partners and pretending that a future Taliban government will care about foreign assistance and being accepted by the so-called international community.

The Taliban have already begun paving their way to Kabul with innocent blood. Al-Qaida is already rebuilding capabilities to strike at our homeland.

So what on Earth are we doing here? What are we doing?

Surely, the administration would not consider the fall of Kabul a success. Surely, it will not look at the fate awaiting Afghan women and girls and say: Mission accomplished. Surely, a terrorist resurgence or the assassination of our Afghan partners cannot look to President Biden's team like a "deliberate" or "responsible" exit from Afghanistan.

But these are the predictable results of these terrible decisions: the consequences of making enormous changes with no real plan to mitigate the risk; the failure to learn from similar mistakes, like the disastrous withdrawal from Iraq back in 2011.

Here in the Senate, it is curious to see that some of our colleagues who are the most exercised—the most exercised—about trying to undo authorizations for the use of military force are somehow also among the quietest—the quietest—when it comes to the unfolding disaster in Afghanistan and oversight of ongoing conflicts.

Make no mistake, whether America is on the ground or over the horizon, the war in Afghanistan will continue, and Americans will not be safer with the Taliban ruling from Kabul.

We will not be safer when al-Qaida regains a safe haven and inspires a new generation of global jihadists. And we won't be safer when coalition partners doubt they can trust our word.

A strategic disaster is what we are witnessing from top to bottom, and a growing risk that this war will end in a victory—a victory—for the Taliban and al-Qaida and become a greater threat to the United States.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO NICK ROSSI

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, around here, it is Members of Congress who typically get the spotlight. When we talk about a bill getting passed, for example, you usually hear about the

Members who introduced and pushed for the bill. You don't usually hear about the staffers.

But none of us in Congress works alone. We are supported by dedicated staffers who spend long days and oftentimes nights and weekends working to serve our constituents and our country.

Today, I want to talk about one of those staffers, my whip office chief of staff who is leaving the Hill after 26 years of government service.

Nick Rossi has been with me since 2013, when I became the ranking member of the Commerce Committee. He came on as deputy staff director and took over as staff director 2 years later.

There isn't one thing that we did in my years as Commerce ranking member and chair that wasn't at least partially owing to Nick Rossi: the 2018 FAA reauthorization; the FAST Act; Coast Guard legislation; FCC bills; broadband legislation; spectrum legislation; section 230 reform legislation, known as SESTA-FOSTA; legislation to reduce the number of annoying robocalls; other consumer protection legislation like the FTC Consumer Fairness Review Act; legislation to advance 5G; and the list goes on.

Nick came to my staff after an already illustrious career on the Hill. He had served as chief counsel at the Senate Judiciary Committee, as chief counsel and chief investigator on the Commerce Committee, and as staff director on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

But his career in government started much earlier. He actually started his government service in the FBI, applying on a whim when he couldn't join the U.S. Attorney's Office because of a hiring freeze.

As is typical for Nick, he graduated first in his class at the FBI Academy and then went on to spend 11 years in the FBI as a special agent, a supervisory special agent, unit chief, associate legal counsel, and media spokesperson.

That sounds like a lot for 11 years but not so much when you know Nick.

I mentioned that he graduated first in his class at the FBI Academy. He also graduated with honors from Notre Dame and from Harvard Law School, where he was in the drama society with our colleague TED CRUZ.

I don't think I have ever asked Nick about any issue and gotten anything less than a thoroughly informed answer, whether the subject was technically in his area of expertise or not.

I will never forget when he accompanied me and former Senator Bill Nelson to the Sanford Underground Research Facility in Lead, SD. This is a lab where scientists are conducting research in particle physics and the expansion of the universe. So it is pretty complicated stuff.

Well, apparently not to Nick. He was in the car with us, and he was throwing out technical formulas and the finer points of physics and cosmology with

the ease he might use when discussing the lunch menu in the Dirksen cafeteria.

When asked how he knew all this stuff—he definitely didn't major in physics, and space wasn't his issue area—he just said it was a hobby. Trust Nick to be flirting with particle physics as a hobby.

But while Nick may often be the smartest person in the room, he is also the most humble. He is often the last to speak. He listens. He asks questions, sometimes maybe when he doesn't really need to. And he gives thoughtful, wise counsel.

It has been clear over the last few days as staffers across the Senate learned that Nick was leaving just how respected his voice is in the Senate.

I have had more than one committee staff director talk to me about how he or she learned to run a committee from Nick.

And I know a lot of senior staffers—inside my office but outside of it as well—who will tell you that when they are facing a challenge, the first person that they go to to provide a sounding board is Nick.

And Nick always makes himself available. He is uniformly generous with his time and knowledge, and he treats everyone the same, whether the individual in question is a staff assistant or a chief of staff.

He has brought out the best in every team I have seen him work with, whether at the Commerce Committee or in the whip office.

Nick has been chief of staff in my whip office for 2 years—2 very eventful years. Through it all, Nick has been a steady presence in the whip office and in the Senate. No matter the crisis, Nick is calm and collected, and he inspires that calm in others, although I do hear that it is a different story when he is watching Notre Dame football. The word is that there is a lot of ranting, pacing, and yelling at the TV, but I have not observed that.

Above all, Nick is a character guy, which matters a lot to me. He is a man of honor, integrity, and principle.

I never have to worry that Nick is going to cut corners or bend the rules. He is always going to do things the right way, and there is nothing more important than that.

I can't talk about Nick without also mentioning his commitment to his family. His pride in his kids always shines through, and just as he is never too busy to talk to a staffer who is having a problem, he is always ready to take a break from his work to help his daughter Elena with her math homework—another subject Nick didn't major in but is, of course, really good at—or to build swords and helmets and bows and arrows with his son Johnny.

I am very grateful to his wife Katherine and to Elena and Johnny for sharing him with us for all these years.

And I am very happy that there are fewer late nights in his future so that he can get in some more time with his family.

I realize that Nick may be starting to sound a little superhuman here, so let me just say that while he is a man of many talents who has not only not successfully repaired the family's microwave and dishwasher but is also known for building a balloon arch in the shape of a shark for his kids' school, I am reliably informed that he is not a good cook.

And I am pretty sure that "not" was bold and underlined.

But, seriously, Nick is one in a million, and it has been my privilege to have him lead the team in the whip office.

His absence will be sorely felt by me, by my staff, and throughout Capitol Hill, and I hope he won't mind the occasional phone call to pick his brain on some of the issues that are facing the Senate.

Nick, thank you for your service, and God bless you in all your future undertakings. Wherever you land next, they will be lucky to have you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 3684

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, infrastructure is the physical backbone of our country, and it is an example of positive, constructive American achievement and accomplishment.

Unfortunately, this particular bill, in its process, content, pricetag, and long-term effects, simply will not serve the country, Americans, and particularly Utahns well. It will ultimately be detrimental to our economy, to the daily lives of the American people, and even in some cases the infrastructure itself.

Now, I am not saying I don't appreciate the hard work, goodwill, and excellent intentions of my colleagues who put many long hours, weeks, and months into crafting it; nor am I suggesting that there aren't good things in the bill, good things that would benefit deserving people in this country.

As I have said before, the question is not whether or not infrastructure is a good and a necessary thing; nor is the question whether the bill contains some good things.

The question is, rather, how much should the Federal Government be involved in infrastructure? And if it should, where it should. How much should it be spending on it?

The truth is the particulars of this bill take the scope far beyond what should be under the realm of the Federal Government, under the domain of the Federal Government, specifically at a price far beyond what we can afford and at a time when we are already far into feeling the sting of inflation.

There is a reason that our Founding Fathers reserved “numerous and indefinite” powers to the States while providing “few and defined” powers to the Federal Government. Article I, section 8 of the Constitution literally lists the particular powers given to Congress. It tells us what they are. And you will notice that infrastructure generally is not one of them.

Now, in some cases it does make sense that the Federal Government is involved in some infrastructure. The Interstate Highway System is a good example of that. Postal roads, also specifically accounted for in article I, section 8, are another example of that.

This bill, however, includes things like bike paths and beautification projects, mass transit systems, surface roads, roads that start and stop in one State and are not part of the Interstate Highway System—things that, while good and lovely and useful, are a far cry from what the Federal Government can and should reasonably and successfully oversee. What is more, it does so at an enormous pricetag, one that will dig us even deeper and deeper into debt at the expense of the American people, both now and further down the road.

Now, proponents of the bill insist, and will continue to insist as we debate this, that the bill is paid for. But, in fact, despite the staggeringly large amount of money that it spends—estimated to be \$1.2 trillion in total, the largest amount for a package of this kind in history by far—it still does not have a score from the Congressional Budget Office.

Normally we don't vote on, much less pass, something like this without a CBO score. We don't have one. And I regret to say that many of the so-called pay-fors amount to flimsy budget gimmicks that, in reality, do no such thing as pay for the bill.

So what are these so-called pay-fors?

Well, let's take the new reporting requirements on cryptocurrency, for example, which would allegedly bring in \$28 billion. Everything about this pay-for is half-baked and unclear.

How exactly will additional revenue reporting generate new tax revenue? And how can you possibly apply stock exchange-style reporting requirements to something so different and decentralized as Bitcoin, Dogecoin, and other cryptocurrencies?

At best, this revenue gimmick will fail. At worst, it will hamper financial innovation for decades to come.

Take the mandated sales of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which the bill sponsors claim will produce \$6 billion in revenue starting 7 years from now. But do we realistically know what the demand for oil might be at that time or what can happen in the meantime when we might need to use oil in this Strategic Petroleum Reserve?

What happens when we get 5 years down the road and Congress determines that we should hold onto the oil a bit longer until we might be able to generate more revenue from the sale?

What if even more of these sales are congressionally mandated in these years, essentially flooding the market and causing the price of that same oil to crash?

Take the pension smoothing component of the bill, which would only cause us to lose more money in the long-term and simultaneously threaten the solvency of retirement benefits—the retirement benefits of millions and millions of American workers.

Take the rebate rule delay, which so far has never, and may never, go into effect. Delaying something that has no set time for implementation cannot realistically be predicted to produce \$49 billion in savings.

Take the \$20 billion in future spectrum auctions. While spectrum auctions can certainly produce a great deal of revenue, this possible future auction may end up never happening. It could have significant restrictions on it due to the dynamics of adjacent bands, or it could simply produce far less than we are being asked to assume today.

Finally, take the claim of \$205 billion in unused COVID funds. Upon further investigation, it includes only roughly \$50.2 billion of unused COVID funds as a real pay-for.

The other \$150 billion is simply spending that didn't happen because the country began to emerge from the pandemic. Many States ended the enhanced unemployment benefits that were keeping more people out of work, and other States, local communities, businesses, and families didn't require as much Federal spending, thanks to their own successes and their own resiliency.

In other words, this other \$150 billion is not a pay-for. It is fake. It is simply spending or lost revenue that was never realized. And whether this bill passes or not, this \$150 billion will never be realized.

No, the numbers for these pay-fors do not add up. The math for this bill is faulty, to say the least. What is more, much of the massive amount that it will be spending will not even be efficient or effective spending on infrastructure. Even if this were the role of the Federal Government, then we ought to make sure that it spends those funds efficiently and effectively.

But, unfortunately, the fact of the matter is that along with Federal dollars come a whole host of Byzantine laws and regulations that prevent precisely that, including restrictions imposed by everything from NEPA to the Davis-Bacon Act.

The Davis-Bacon Act artificially inflates labor prices by requiring that all federally funded construction projects worth more than \$2,000 pay workers at least the prevailing wage rate on non-Federal projects in the same locality. And it has substantially driven up the cost of Federal projects, hindered economic growth, wasted taxpayer dollars, and hurt unskilled laborers each year. In fact, it is estimated that repealing it

would save taxpayers \$10.7 billion over 10 years.

NEPA has imposed similar burdens and costs. Signed into law in 1970, it was intended to account for the environmental consequences of proposed Federal actions or projects. But over the last 50 years, it has substantially deviated from its original purpose, morphing into a complex, bureaucratic labyrinth; stalling projects from frivolous lawsuits and bureaucratic delays; and dramatically increasing the cost and timeline of their completion. Sometimes this law stretches projects that should take a couple of years to complete into decades.

At the very least, we ought to reform these costly, ineffective regulations—and do so drastically—so that Federal infrastructure can be completed better and faster, which is exactly what I proposed in the amendment that I put before this body yesterday.

But this bill, in its current form, is ultimately not good for Utahns, and it is not good for the American people. Driving more Federal money into infrastructure, unfortunately, means we will pay more to build less. We will be paying more to build less. It means less money going to steel and concrete in the ground, and a whole lot more going to lawyers, accountants, lobbyists, compliance specialists, and bureaucratic delays. It means longer and more expensive projects.

Now, this varies State by State, but in Utah, it is estimated that adding Federal dollars to a project increases the overall cost by 20 percent—sometimes as much as 40 percent. Not only will it mean more expensive projects, but more expensive products too.

Another provision in this bill would impose new fees on dozens of chemicals used in countless products and consumer goods in our day-to-day lives—chemicals found in concrete, wood, plastics, rubber, dyes, detergents, drugs, and pesticides for food, just to name a few. So every time you buy one of those products—or almost any product, for that matter—you will be paying a little bit for this. Only it is not a tax; it is a fee, and it is hidden from your view. So the consumer—the poor and middle-class taxpayer—doesn't see a tax increase. They just see that they are paying even more for everything that they buy.

Another provision would extend Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's “g-fees” for an entire decade. These fees could add thousands of dollars to the mortgages of home buyers at a time when that first home is increasingly out of reach for many. Utahns can't afford this. Congress is supposed to be addressing problems like these, not making them worse with sneaky new fees. This comes at a time when Americans are already feeling the sharp sting of snowballing inflation.

Now, this graph highlights some of the problem. It highlights what the American people have felt over the last 12 to 18 months. You will notice a

curve sloping sharply upward. Today, inflation is at 5.4 percent, which means, on average, the goods you buy today are 5.4 percent more expensive and the savings you have responsibly accrued are actually worth less.

And don't forget—the Federal Government's reckless spending has exacerbated this trend. Look at how the red has grown, what we see here. The red that you see in this chart, these are deficits. Look at how it has grown. The red portion of the graph is deficit spending.

While we surely needed to spend some additional money during the COVID pandemic, did we really need to spend this much more, to the point where we were borrowing a lot more than we were taking in? You know, we borrowed close to \$4 trillion last year. Even if you think that we did need to spend this much more, wouldn't we try to get our country back on track and to discontinue this unfunded spending spree that contributes to runaway inflation?

Look, from gas to groceries and from homes to healthcare, every day, it is getting harder for hard-working Americans to afford the basic necessities of day-to-day life. Take just a quick look here at everyday items. These are not luxury items that we associate with the elite; these are things that ordinary people purchase every day. Compared to the period of time before the pandemic, not so very long ago, just 16 months ago, eggs are now 13 percent more expensive; milk is 11.3 percent more expensive; chicken breast, 11.3 percent more expensive; bread is 9.4 percent more expensive; and gas is more than 27.5 percent more expensive.

The fact is that packages like this one are not without their effects on the people we have taken an oath to represent. At the end of the day, it is the American people whose tax dollars we take to pay for packages like this. At the end of the day, it is the American people who will bear the brunt of the debt we are forcing upon them. At the end of the day, it is the American people who will feel the effects in every aspect of their daily lives—in their workplaces, their communities, and their families—and they should get a say in it.

They certainly shouldn't have to sign on to something that was made known to the American people at 10 p.m. on Sunday night. Those who drafted this legislation had 4 months to review it and 4 months to get to know it. The American people shouldn't be asked to pass this in 4 days.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Delaware.

AMENDMENT NOS. 2146 AND 2210 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up to the substitute and be reported by number: Wicker No. 2146 and Kennedy No. 2210; further, that upon disposition of the

Johnson amendment, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no amendments in order to the amendments prior to a vote in relation to the amendments, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption of the Kennedy amendment, 5 minutes for debate for Senator WICKER and 2 minutes for debate for opponents before the Wicker vote, and 4 minutes for debate equally divided before the Kennedy vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2146 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. WICKER, proposes an amendment numbered 2146 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide that the Administrative Procedures Act shall apply to actions taken by the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information in carrying out the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program)

On page 2081, strike line 3 and all that follows through "(3)" on line 7 and insert the following:

Act"); and

(2)

AMENDMENT NO. 2210 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. KENNEDY, proposes an amendment numbered 2210 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide emergency assistance for disaster response and recovery, and for other expenses, directly related to Hurricanes Laura, Delta, and Zeta)

At the end of division I, add the following:

SEC. 90009. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts otherwise appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there is appropriated to the "Community Development Fund", for necessary expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, and restoration of infrastructure, housing, and economic revitalization in areas in States for which the President declared a major disaster under title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5170 et seq.) related to Hurricanes Laura, Delta, and Zeta, \$1,100,000,000, to remain available until expended, for activities authorized under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.).

(b) DEPOSIT OF C-BAND SPECTRUM AUCTION PROCEEDS IN TREASURY.—Section 309(j)(8) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 309(j)(8)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking "and (G)" and inserting "(G), and (H)";

(2) in subparagraph (C)(i), by striking "and (G)" and inserting "(G), and (H)"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(H) C-BAND AUCTION PROCEEDS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), and except as provided in subparagraph (B), of the proceeds (including deposits and upfront payments from successful bidders) from the use of a

system of competitive bidding under this subsection to award licenses in the band of frequencies between 3700 megahertz and 3980 megahertz (designated by the Commission as 'Auction 107'), \$1,100,000,000 shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury and used for emergency assistance under section 90009(a) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act."

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today because I note the Democrats being so eager to move to their reckless tax-and-spending spree, and it is something I absolutely oppose. If we pass a bill of that magnitude, the American people will be paying more in taxes, will be paying more in the cost of living, and it will continue to impact the American people in a very negative way.

Right now, the Senate is debating a separate bill, an infrastructure bill, and, in fact, the bills are not completely separate. It would be nice if they were, but they are not. The reason they are not separate is because NANCY PELOSI, the Speaker of the House, has made it abundantly clear that any bipartisan infrastructure bill that is passed here in this Senate won't see the light of day in the House of Representatives unless and until, as she has said, the Senate also sends her a multitrillion-dollar reckless tax-and-spending bill. According to one non-partisan group, that bill could cost up to \$5.5 trillion over the next 10 years.

Now, NANCY PELOSI has said time and time again that there will not be one penny for roads, not one penny for bridges, not one penny for airports or ports until she gets the reckless tax-and-spending bill that she is demanding. It wasn't a negotiation; it was a hijacking. And NANCY PELOSI isn't just a hijacker; she is also an arsonist. What she is proposing is going to pour jet fuel on the fire of inflation that is currently ravaging the country.

The flame was lit months ago when Democrats borrowed \$2 trillion under the name of COVID relief. But just look at the economic projections before the bill became law. Some people failed to predict the inflation. The Federal Reserve failed to predict it. The White House budget office said: Oh, no, we won't get inflation. The Congressional Budget Office said no. There were Democratic economists, though, who warned that it would happen, and Republicans pointed out clearly that it was going to happen, and that is what has happened now. Democrats refused to listen. They borrowed and spent an additional \$2 trillion, and inflation has gone up every month since.

Core inflation is now the fastest and highest it has been in 40 years. Who are the victims of this? Well, they are people who are on fixed incomes; they are seniors; they are working families trying to get by. Now it costs \$25 more every time you fill up your vehicle with gasoline. If you fill up a truck in Wyoming, it could be even more than

that compared to the fill-ups of Inauguration Day. If you go to the grocery store now, it is about \$25 more for the weekly trip to the grocery store. So you are talking \$25 extra a week in gas, \$25 extra a week in groceries; \$50 extra a week, which comes to \$2,500 annually for a hard-working family in America because of the inflation Joe Biden and the Democrats have brought upon us.

Of course, this kind of inflation slows our economic recovery. I just found out last week that economic growth is significantly below what economists had predicted it should be at this point. It does seem the Democrats still haven't learned basic economics. Now they want to make the same mistake all over again, even at a higher level. They want to borrow and spend trillions more.

Last week, we found out that the previous Democratic bill gave \$800 million to prisoners behind bars. Now, TOM COTTON and I came to this floor, and we tried to stop the Democrats from giving our taxpayer dollars to prisoners currently behind bars. We specifically warned it would happen as stimulus checks were sent out around the country. We tried to stop this as part of the Democratic spending bill, but all 50 Democrats, every one of them supported direct checks to prisoners behind bars. The senior Senator from Illinois came to the floor and gave a speech defending it. He implied it would be racist not to give free money to people behind bars.

Every one of the 50 Democrats put \$800 million of American taxpayer dollars on the credit card and sent checks to prisoners behind bars. This means more debt and more inflation for law-abiding citizens in exchange for money to criminals. It tells the American people all we need to know about the priorities of the Democratic Party.

Now Democrats want another round of payoffs. This payoff is even more expensive than the last one. Democrats are promising payoffs to all their favorite groups: climate activists, left-wing professors, trial lawyers, and union bosses. This bill, this reckless tax-and-spending bill, includes one liberal priority after another.

Even as we face the worst border crisis in the last two decades, Democrats are now promising amnesty and citizenship and voting rights for millions of illegal immigrants. Once they get amnesty, then they can get all the other Democratic payoffs as well. This is going to lead to an additional tidal wave of illegal immigration, and all of this has a price tag, and someone has to pay.

Democrats tell nice stories, and Republicans do the math. This bill is so expensive, the Democrats will have to go after every working family in America in order to pay for it. One way or another, every working American will end up paying for this. There is not some rich person who is going to be able to pay for all of this. There aren't enough rich people on Earth to pay for this level of spending.

Democrats are going to go after the majority of the people in this country, and, of course, that is the middle class. That is exactly what they intend to do with this bill because this bill is going to raise taxes on family farms and ranches.

According to the accounting firm Ernst and Young, this bill, this spending bill that NANCY PELOSI is demanding go from the Senate to the House before any infrastructure bill is passed, would eliminate 80,000 jobs over 10 years. The bill would raise taxes on small businesses, which are already struggling to stay open because of Democratic policies. Anyone who sells their home will pay thousands and thousands more in taxes.

Now, this is also going to include a carbon import tax, which will drive up prices even higher.

The bill would be a socialist takeover of our economy—more taxes, more spending, more debt, more government eating into people's paychecks and eating into their savings. There is not a single Republican in the House or in the Senate who is going to support this reckless tax-and-spending spree.

We need to stop this freight train to socialism. We don't have a taxing problem in this country; we have a spending problem. Inflation is already high enough. We know what the cause is. We know it is the cause of the excessive Democratic spending, and this is going to make it worse. Families across this country are struggling right now to make ends meet. Family businesses are struggling to stay open. It is time to stop this reckless tax-and-spending spree.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Arizona.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, it is an honor to rise today to deliver my maiden speech.

Nine months ago, the people of Arizona trusted me with a great responsibility: to represent them in the U.S. Senate; to do so during a pandemic that has challenged every one of us, taken loved ones too soon, and battered our economy; and to fill the remaining years of Senator John McCain's sixth term.

Each day since then, I have gone to work for the people of Arizona, striving to fulfill that responsibility, undeterred by the challenges we have in front of us because that is what Arizonans have done over the last year and a half—protecting their families from this virus, keeping themselves and their businesses afloat, and looking out for their neighbors.

Arizonans have faced down this virus and the economic fallout that came with it with determination. And I came here to have their backs and to work towards a brighter future for our growing State because we can't just rebuild our economy the way it was before. We have to reinvent it and create the jobs

of the future, good-paying jobs that you can actually raise a family on. It is a long to-do list. But, hey, I am used to those.

The checklist for flying the Space Shuttle stands about 6 feet tall. The Senate, though, is not NASA. It doesn't move as fast. And it is not the U.S. Navy, either, where everyone works together toward a common goal.

But my wife, Gabby, taught me a thing or two about how to listen and how to find common ground. Now, she loved representing Arizona in Congress, and no one works harder than she does. Now, neither of us expected that it would be me serving here in the U.S. Senate. I might have been the astronaut, but it turned out that she is the one who would nearly lose her life serving our country.

I am so proud of her and of her relentless positivity that she brings to her continued rehabilitation. It inspires me each and every day. I could not do this without her support or the support of my daughters, Claudia and Claire, or my first grandchild, Sage, who was born in May. Maybe, I am not so sure about her support; she is only 2 months old.

But in my first days here, I spoke to Republicans and Democrats to work on emergency COVID relief. For so many Arizonans, the relief we got passed was a lifeline—the difference between bankruptcy and keeping the lights on, between losing their small business and paying their employees. I have heard that countless of times as I have traveled across the State.

In March, on my 100th day in the Senate, I spoke with a group of Arizonans to understand how COVID-19 was impacting them and their families. One of those conversations really stuck with me, and I want to take a second to tell you about Susana Andrade.

Prior to the pandemic, Susana worked in a school cafeteria in South Phoenix. Her husband worked as a landscaper. When the pandemic spiked in Arizona, her husband's work slowed down and the school closed. But Susana and her coworkers kept going to work. The school was continuing to offer meals for pickup for students and families who needed them, and a lot of them needed these meals. She told me that they initially were just offering breakfast and lunch, but then they added dinner and a snack because the demand was just so high.

Susana and her coworkers knew how hard the pandemic had hit the community, how many folks were out of work. There were students who wouldn't eat if they weren't there to make the meals. So she kept going to work, making and packing meals for students and their families.

And, then, in February, she and her entire family got sick with COVID. She couldn't go to work for weeks, and she and her family struggled to pay their bills that month while they tried to recover.

Now, Susana's story has stuck with me over the last year. Here is a hard-

working Arizona family doing everything right, who just got knocked off their feet. At the same time, Susana embodies the best of what we saw during this awful pandemic: neighbors and parents making tremendous sacrifices to help one another get through this.

I spoke to Susana recently. She told me that days after we spoke in March, she and her family received their stimulus checks, and it made such a big difference in their lives. But she is still now living paycheck to paycheck, working two jobs, trying to provide for her family to just get ahead.

I understand that. Growing up, my mother worked both as a secretary and a waitress at the same time. When my brother and I were in middle school, she decided to become a police officer, like my dad. But she had to pass this physical fitness test, which was designed for men. But my mother was not discouraged. She wasn't discouraged by that or by the fact that, if she would pass, she would become one of the first female police officers in our home town. In fact, I think she liked that. That was my mom for you.

But I knew that she believed that the increased and steady salary would help our family. My mother wanted to give my brother and me every opportunity to succeed. She showed us what we could achieve by having a goal and a plan and working hard at it.

I am here because of a good public education and because of the opportunity that my parents created for me to serve our country and pursue my dreams. But for so many families, it is becoming harder to get ahead, and the pandemic only made this more difficult. Businesses shuttered, savings drained, and debt and bills piled up.

What every parent wants—what my mom wanted—is to be able to work hard and give their children a future filled with opportunity.

That is why the most important responsibility we have here is not just to rebuild our economy but to reinvent it for the future. And doing that starts with infrastructure: roads, bridges, water, the power grid, high-speed internet. And it is not just in big cities but in rural and small towns, in smalltown Arizona and Tribal communities. That is the item on our checklist now.

Arizona is facing a severe drought that requires us to improve our water infrastructure and increase or resiliency.

Schoolbuses on the Navajo Nation cost three times as much to maintain because so many of the roads are unpaved.

I-10, which runs through the center of our State, between Tucson and Phoenix, has not been expanded in years. A signal accident can cause delays for hours. That happens almost every day.

It is clear that Arizona will benefit from upgrading and modernizing our infrastructure. That is why, for the past few months, I have been working with a group of Republicans and Demo-

crats to come to an agreement on a historic investment in our infrastructure. I advocated for Arizona's priorities, and we worked together to find common ground and work out our differences. And now we are on the verge of passing it.

This is going to fix roads and bridges, improve Tribal water and transportation infrastructure, expand affordable high-speed internet access, and make Arizona more resilient to drought and wildfires.

I have been determined to deliver these infrastructure investments that Arizona needs to continue to grow. We want to grow, and we want to attract new and innovative companies to our State because Arizona's prosperity depends on continuing to create new, high-paying jobs, including growing our tech sector.

Now, one of the biggest success stories of our growing tech sector is an industry that actually produces something physically small, microchips.

Microchips go in everything, from our phones and appliances and cars to computers, but also the most sophisticated fighter jets and missile systems.

There is currently a global shortage of microchips, and the truth is, today, just 12 percent of them are manufactured here in the United States. It used to be 40 percent. Many foreign competitors, including China, are investing heavily to try to dominate this industry.

Now, Arizona does manufacture a lot of microchips. It already employs about 30,000 people in good-paying jobs in this industry, and it is poised to grow. We recently announced investment plans from Intel and the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company. Arizona can lead the way as we restore more microchip manufacturing and development to American soil.

That is the goal of this \$52 billion plan that I spent months working on with Senators CORNYN and WARNER, to create new advanced manufacturing facilities, or fabs, in places like Arizona. I made it my mission to get this passed through the Senate because it is important. It is important to our economy, and it is important to our national security, ensuring that our supply chain for something so critical does not depend on adversaries like China.

Transformational investments such as this will create thousands of high-paying jobs, and we got it passed through the Senate, Republicans and Democrats working together.

Now, we must continue working on this checklist, getting Arizonans the skills they need for these new jobs. For some, that will mean getting a college degree in science or engineering.

Arizona is home to three world-class universities that are leaders in research and innovation. We must continue to educate the best scientists and engineers in the world. That is the only way we are going to stay ahead.

At the same time, we know that about a third of students who graduate

from high school will not pursue a 4-year degree. Now, that doesn't mean that they can't be set up for success in the 21st century economy, and we need to make sure that they are.

Advanced manufacturing facilities, like the microchip fabs that I mentioned earlier, for those we need well-trained semiconductor processors, and we need electricians, and we need HVAC technicians. These are good-paying careers for those who get the skills and training that they need.

And right now, a lot of young Arizonans are getting those skills through our community college system.

At Pima Community College's downtown campus in Tucson, they have a new Automotive Technology and Innovation Center that I visited last month. Their students are learning how to operate the software that automatically controls drills and lathes and milling machines and 3D printers and other tools. They can be trained not just in traditional automotive technology but in electric vehicles as well.

Arizona is becoming a center for innovative electric vehicle manufacturers. So why shouldn't we be getting these students the skills they need for this technology right now?

Pima Community College's chancellor, Chancellor Lambert, calls this much needed approach "moving at the speed of business." What he means is our education system must meet the demands of today's workforce, and that has to be the case not just in major metro areas but in rural Arizona, as well, and in rural America.

At Yavapai College in Northern Arizona, they just opened a new Skilled Trades Center in Clarkdale, where they will train a new generation of construction workers and plumbers and electricians and HVAC technicians.

I could not be more impressed with Arizona's community college system.

Yavapai College is also taking advantage of partnerships with companies to set students up with opportunities that prepare them to immediately enter the workforce in industries like mining.

Moving at the speed of business, that is how we are going to prepare hard-working young students to get these good-paying jobs. It is also how we are going to outcompete and outinnovate other countries like China, having a talented workforce that can fill the jobs of the future and develop cutting-edge technologies that are critical not just to our economy but to our national security as well.

Now, these are issues that I know Republicans and Democrats agree on.

And even on tough issues, I believe that we can also find common ground. We have had crisis after crisis at our border, each a result of decades of failure in Washington to adequately address border security and fix our broken immigration system.

Senator PORTMAN and I have introduced bipartisan legislation that would require the Department of Homeland Security to finally develop a plan to

handle increases at the border, to take the politics out of this, no matter which party controls Congress or the White House, and to provide dedicated funding to carry out that plan and ensure a secure, humane process at the border. Finding common ground on issues like this is hard, but it is important.

Like many of you, like many of my colleagues, I spent years admiring the way the late Senator John McCain represented Arizona in the U.S. Senate. But my first impressions of John McCain were not of him as a Senator but of his service in the Navy. He was a hero of young naval aviators like me—an example of how to serve your country honorably and bravely, including in the impossible circumstance of being shot down and captured.

His legacy means so much to the State of Arizona, and it lives on through his children and his wife, Cindy, whom I am so grateful to have here today in the Gallery.

Thank you.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

His legacy, it is something that cannot be matched, but it is what inspires me serving in this Senate seat. And it is his example of bipartisanship, of independence that continues to demand more of us. So I am going to continue focusing on delivering results, on beating this virus, and reinventing our economy for the future so that hard-working Arizonans have every opportunity to succeed.

Arizonans sent me here to have their backs, and that is what I intend to do. Thank you.

I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

H.R. 3684

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, there are a lot of folks gathering around our new Senator from Arizona, congratulating him, commending him on his speech.

I said to him—I am Navy. We have got a bunch of military people that serve here: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines. But in the Navy, when somebody does an especially good job, we say “Bravo Zulu.” And that was an exceptional, exceptional address.

We are delighted to be joined by Cindy McCain.

Before I yield to the Senator from Wisconsin for his amendment, the theme that we just heard from our new Senator from Arizona really focuses on preparing, through the groundwork, plowing the field in anticipation of creating jobs. And we do that in a lot of ways. He has mentioned a bunch of them in terms of technology jobs and so forth.

One of the other ways is what we are doing with the legislation before us today, and that is investing in our infrastructure broadly, not just roads, highways, and bridges; not just waterworks; not just broadband; not just surface transportation. All of the above. All of the above.

So it is a great way to start our day today.

With that, I yield the floor. I think the gentleman, our colleague from Wisconsin, has some comments that he may want to make, unless the leader wishes to go next.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

AMENDMENT NO. 2245

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise to speak to my amendment that is completely germane to the discussion of infrastructure. I can't think of more important infrastructure that would actually secure our homeland from a variety of threats.

But as I have always said, coming from a manufacturing background, the first step in solving a problem is admitting you have one, and right now this administration is in a complete state of denial regarding the crisis that is on the border.

This crisis has been growing. It is not a seasonal surge; this is a growing problem. This has been a growing problem, and I have my chart here that demonstrates that.

Here is January. This is when President Biden came into office. You can see the enormous surge of the crisis he created. Vice President HARRIS went down to Central America looking for the root cause of this crisis. She only would have had to walk into the Oval Office and look at President Biden because President Biden is the root cause of this crisis.

It is his policies, the dismantling of successful policies from the previous administration that had stemmed the flow, that had largely secured our border until this President took office and reversed all that progress. It is a real shame.

Let me just give you the numbers because you have to describe the problem. This has been growing. For the last 4 or 5 months, in particular, we have been averaging, first, almost 6,000 and now over 6,000 apprehensions per day—6,000. In June it was 6,249. In July it will probably be over 6,500. There have been weeks we believe it is over 7,000 people per day coming in and being apprehended at the border.

Now, that doesn't even count the 750 to 1,000 known got-aways. DHS is now—or CPP, at least, is now estimating that is going to result in about 269,000 people coming into this country that we know they came in; we just couldn't catch them. This also doesn't even describe or enumerate how many unknown got-aways.

So, again, the fact of the matter is, from January through July, approximately 1.3 million people have been apprehended coming into this country without documentation. About 173,000 of those individuals have been released in the interior, either with a notice to appear or, even worse, a notice to report. If you multiply that times 2, that is 346,000 people dispersed to all points of America.

DHS, this administration, is not notifying the States, not notifying the

cities that these individuals, apparently claiming asylum, are coming into communities near you. You add that to the 269,000 estimated known got-aways, that is over 600,000 people just this year. That is larger than the population in the State of Wyoming. It is approaching the population of the State of Vermont.

And, again, this is while we have the title 42 restrictions in place. Probably about 900,000 people in the first 7 months had been returned under title 42. If the administration ends that program, imagine the surge.

Now, there once was a time when securing the border was a nonpartisan issue. Senator McCain led the charge. In 2006, this body passed, on a vote of 80 to 19, the Secure Fence Act, which was going to build about 700 miles of fence. In the end, only 36 miles was double-layer fencing; the rest was pretty ineffective, as we have seen.

But voting for that bill was President Biden, President Obama, Senator CARPER, Secretary of State Clinton, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator SCHUMER, Senator WYDEN, Senator STABENOW. This was a bipartisan effort to secure our border. But somewhere between 2006 and 2021, this has become a partisan issue.

Now, what is absurd is, in the last administration, again, we pretty well solved the problem, had allocated about \$10 billion to build the fence. It has all been contracted. It has all been paid for. We have built about 453 miles of the 738 miles that was contracted for; 285 miles remain unbuilt.

An exit report by Senator LANKFORD shows that we have spent about \$2 billion getting out of those contracts—\$2 billion to not build the wall. It is costing us \$3 million a day just to guard the steel fencing that is lying there not being used.

So my amendment is very simple. It is very common sense. It says, please, let's recognize fences work. Certainly, Congress recognized it when we put a double layer around the people's House for a number of months, spent hundreds of millions of dollars on that security effort.

So let's not waste the taxpayers' money. Let's recognize walls work. We need to complete the 285 miles of wall that will help secure our border, that will help secure our homeland, and that will help keep Americans safe.

It is a very simple amendment. Let's hope it is not a partisan result.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the Johnson amendment. This measure would force continued payment of government contractors to build an ill-conceived border wall.

Most of these funds were never intended for this purpose. More than \$10 billion was redirected from the Department of Defense, and these funds were intended for military installations and functions such as schools for military

children and National Guard equipment.

The Biden administration is conducting a comprehensive review of these contracts, led by the Department of Defense and Homeland Security. DHS has recently announced that they will continue work on certain common-sense projects on the southern border to address life, safety, environmental, and operational considerations. These decisions will be guided by what is best for our national security, not well-connected government contractors profiting off of hard-earned taxpayer dollars.

We need to move forward with smart, bipartisan investments that secure both our southern and our northern borders, and we must not look backward at the former administration's boondoggle.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on the Johnson amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, in quick response, the prior administration's—what the good Senator claimed a "boondoggle" worked.

During this comprehensive review by this administration—again, this administration is the root cause of this problem; they caused this—the problem is growing worse. It is not getting better.

Congress, by supporting a double layer of fence around this Capitol for months, spent hundreds of millions of dollars keeping us safe and secure, recognizes that fencing and walls work.

Again, this fencing has been paid for. This wall has been paid for. Two billion dollars will be wasted. Three million dollars a day will be wasted. This is just common sense, and it will improve the security of this Nation.

And, again, in 2006, this was a bipartisan type of effort. Building 700 miles of fence was bipartisan: 80 to 19. It should be bipartisan today. I am urging my colleagues, let's finish building this wall. Let's not waste billions of dollars in taxpayer money.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for several minutes on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment. I am the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Appropriations for Homeland Security. The President's budget request included a rescission of \$2 billion that we, as Members of this body, put, enacted, as the gentleman from Wisconsin has clearly illuminated.

And, at the same time, we are having a tremendous problem at our southern border. We all know this. We don't have the July numbers out yet, but we know that apprehensions are going to be in excess of over 200,000 in 1 month.

The July numbers also indicate that the number of unaccompanied children is the largest ever encountered in 1 month.

There are currently now over 150 miles of wall system projects that we as Congress legally funded that are now in jeopardy of being canceled. When you go to the border, you see millions of dollars' worth of steel slats lying on the ground that were to be constructed until President Biden canceled those projects. Do you know who else sees those border walls on the ground? Human traffickers. Drug smugglers.

I have, as we all have, been to the southern border several times. Customs and Border Patrol agents have told us that a border wall is a necessary part of a system to stop the flow of illegal immigration and illicit drugs.

The border wall is infrastructure. It is infrastructure to keep America safe. It is infrastructure to keep drugs out of this country. It is infrastructure to control illegal immigration.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on the Johnson amendment to prohibit the cancelation of contracts to build the border wall.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, over the years, I have made any number of trips to our Nation's southern border. I have also traveled extensively throughout Central America—and sometimes with the author of this legislation—with many colleagues, Democratic and Republican. One of the people who have been to that part of the world more than me is a guy who used to serve here in the Senate—later, Vice President—and that is our President, Joe Biden.

There is a verse in Scripture in the New Testament, Matthew 25, which speaks to the least of these, and one of the things: When I was hungry, did you feed me? When I was naked, did you clothe me? When I was thirsty, did you get me to drink? When I was a stranger in your land, did you welcome me? Did you welcome me?

To the extent we have looked out for the least of these, then we have a brighter future.

But anyway, the reason I raise that, we have this moral imperative to look out for the least of these, and that includes people who end up on our borders looking for safe haven. The reason why so many people continue to come to our borders from Central America—especially Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador—is because they live lives in fear; deprived of economic opportunity and hope; corruption, crime. You know, if any of us lived there with our families, we would want to get out of there, too, and find a place to go to with a brighter future.

As a former chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, border security is enormously important. We need secure borders; no question about that. There are a whole bunch of force multi-

pliers which help provide more secure borders, including barriers—including barriers—and I have supported them. So has the Senator, who is also a former chairman of the committee. We have traveled in that part of the world together.

One of the things we fully agree on is what I just said. We can spend the next, you know, year, 5 years, 10 years securing our border. That is important. But if we don't address those root causes of why people are coming here, 10, 20 years from now, they will still be coming. They will still be coming. We have to be smarter than that.

This is a shared responsibility; it is not all on the United States. I said to my colleague from West Virginia, I like to use the example of Home Depot, which RON JOHNSON, Senator JOHNSON, heard me use more than a few times. Home Depot—their ad line is "You can do it. We can help." In these countries we are getting all this immigration flow from, they can do it, but we can help.

One of the things we set up was something called the Alliance for Prosperity a number of years ago, with Democratic and Republican support—I think with support of certainly then-Vice President Biden and Senator McCain, the late John McCain. Among the things that we need to focus on and we are doing under the Alliance for Prosperity are, one, addressing crime and violence; two, addressing corruption; and three, economic hope and opportunity. Those are the three buckets. We put money in those buckets, the expectation is that those three countries put even more money in those buckets, matching us 2, 3, 4, 5 dollars for every dollar that we put up. There are other countries that we have an expectation for them to help. There are private businesses; there is an expectation for them to help. Nonprofits. There is an expectation for all. This is a shared responsibility.

As the place where all these illegal drugs are coming from, moving those drugs through these three countries—we have some moral responsibility to do something to help the situation down there, not just at the border.

So with that in mind, I am not going to support this amendment. But I would just note, I always look for common ground. The author of the amendment knows full well—I have heard him talk about it eloquently, about the need to go after root causes. For as long as we have been working on this issue, all those years, we have needed to work on root causes, and we still do today as well.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I need to respond quickly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now 2 minutes equally divided before a vote on the Johnson amendment.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I need to respond quickly.

Senator CARPER was talking about root causes. The root cause of the instability—the primary cause of the violence in Central America is Americans' insatiable demand for drugs. If you solve that problem, you solve the root cause of the problem, and you won't have the violence.

But the root cause of this current crisis—because it was already solved—the root cause of this current crisis is President Biden's policies. President Biden is the root cause. So if you want to fix this, we can fix it. Secure the border. Go back to the policies that worked. We are not going to be able to fix Central America until we end our insatiable demand for drugs.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, colleagues, in about 48 hours, about a third of the Senate is going to be on an airplane heading for Gillette, WY, and we are going to go and say goodbye to our friend and colleague Mike Enzi.

I will never forget where I was sitting about, I don't know, 20 years ago as the Presiding Officer, and Mike Enzi was literally standing almost right where you are, talking about the 80-20 rule and why they were so successful in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. Senator Kennedy and Mike Enzi—Democrat, Republican—how they were able to find common ground and get stuff done: the 80-20 rule.

I said to Mike Enzi that day: What is the 80-20 rule?

He said: About 80 percent of the stuff, Ted and I agree on, and about 20 percent, we don't. What we do is we focus on the 80 percent where we agree.

There is common ground here. I think that the Senator from Wisconsin knows what it is. And I would ask that in addition to talking about our differences, let's talk about where we agree, and let's do good work there.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2146

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. JOHNSON. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 298 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Barrasso	Capito	Crapo
Blackburn	Cassidy	Cruz
Blunt	Collins	Daines
Boozman	Cornyn	Ernst
Braun	Cotton	Fischer
Burr	Cramer	Grassley

Hagerty	Marshall	Scott (FL)
Hawley	McConnell	Scott (SC)
Hooven	Moran	Shelby
Hyde-Smith	Murkowski	Sullivan
Johnson	Paul	Thune
Kennedy	Portman	Tillis
Lankford	Risch	Toomey
Lee	Romney	Tuberville
Lummis	Rounds	Wicker
Manchin	Rubio	Young

NAYS—49

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Bennet	Hirono	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schatz
Booker	Kelly	Schumer
Brown	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Feinstein	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Reed	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Inhofe	Sasse
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 49.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2245) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

AMENDMENT NO. 2146

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I offer today what should be considered a friendly amendment to the broadband section of this infrastructure bill.

Why is it a friendly amendment?

Because by using the Administrative Procedure Act, which my amendment would provide, it would save billions of dollars in broadband build-out funds. It would provide for consumer input, stakeholder input, local and State government input into NTIA—the Agency that will be in charge of this broadband build-out. And also because it will not delay the broadband build-out in any way.

Now, as written today, the broadband section waives the Administrative Procedure Act. The Wicker amendment would simply strike that waive and make the Administrative Procedure Act apply to the broadband section as it applies to so many big programs that are enacted.

If we pass this amendment, here will be the timeline: Let's assume the President doesn't get around to signing this bill until October 1. I would expect the President would sign it earlier than that, but let's assume that he does that. There will be 30 days of notice, 30 days of public comment after the notice is published, a review of those comments, which could take 30 to 40 days. At that point the regulations are published and, after 30 days, they go into effect.

So by my calculations, assuming the President is very, very late in signing the bill, the act and the regulations under the Administrative Procedure Act would be done by February 7.

Now, what we all know—what everyone in this Chamber knows—is that we have to wait on the FCC maps, and they will not be ready until the earliest—until the earliest—by spring of next year, and that is—that is very, very optimistic.

So we have time to do it right, to get public input, to have people who have already experienced this come to the Agency and say: You might want to do it this way; or: You might want to avoid doing it that way because here is our experience.

We did this one time before, and it was only \$4.7 billion. This is \$42 billion. That was the BTOP program, which was enacted in 2009.

We skipped this. We gave it to an Agency which is going to have it this time, the NTIA—a staff of only 157 people—to monitor back then \$4.7 billion; this time it is \$42 billion.

Here is what we learned about the BTOP program, which is an awful lot like this one: When Congress asked NTIA to administer this, the results were deeply troubling.

Let me quote the inspector general, let me quote the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy, and the Phoenix Center. Their own inspector general found that the Agency faced significant challenges in managing the size and complexity of the program. It is a program a tenth the size of what we are talking about today.

The Stanford Institute said NTIA's mechanism for selecting projects was incoherent. NTIA, had they adopted more a reasonable framework, many more households could have been connected with the same money, or the same number of connections could have been realized for a fraction of the cost, because they didn't do what I am advocating today.

The Phoenix Center, an independent think tank, said they found no positive effect on home broadband adoption from the BTOP program.

My fellow colleagues, years from now, when someone realizes we have wasted billions of dollars on this build-out, I would want, and I think my colleagues would want, to say: Well, I voted yes on the Wicker amendment to take the extra 130, 140 days to hear what went right and what went wrong in the past and to make sure we get it right.

No Senator has worked harder than I have on broadband build-out. I want this program to succeed. This is a way to make sure we spend the money correctly, to make sure we do it right.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article dated August 3, just yesterday, from the National Journal.

It says: "How \$65 billion for broadband infrastructure could fall short."

I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the National Journal, Aug. 3, 2021]

HOW \$65 BILLION FOR BROADBAND
INFRASTRUCTURE COULD FALL SHORT
(By Brendan Bordelon)

The \$65 billion set aside for high-speed internet in the Senate's bipartisan infrastructure deal is just a small piece of the bill's \$550 billion in new spending. But don't call the plan unambitious.

"It's the biggest broadband bill in the history of the country," said Gigi Sohn, a fellow at the Georgetown Law Institute for Technology Law & Policy and a former Democratic official at the Federal Communications Commission.

"Would I have preferred more money for deployment? Yeah," said Sohn. "I would like to see \$100 billion rather than \$65 billion. But this is a bipartisan bill, and I think that is super important to remember and appreciate."

Some of those billions are earmarked for a tribal connectivity fund, 'middle-mile' broadband deployments rural telemedicine, distance learning, and other discrete provisions. But the heart of the Senate's broadband infrastructure deal is a \$42 billion pot of money for state and territorial governments, which will have to convince Washington that their plan to build out high-speed internet to rural and underserved regions will work before receiving federal grants.

But there's a catch. While that money will be set aside immediately after the legislation is signed into law, the bill stipulates that no funds can be sent to states until after the FCC fixes its much-maligned set of national broadband maps showing where coverage exists and where it doesn't.

The latest FCC estimate suggests that around 14.5 million Americans now live in regions without access to broadband. But other estimates have come in much higher, and the persistence of inaccurate maps means no one really knows for sure.

Lawmakers and policy experts alike had mulled whether it made sense to move ahead on broadband funding despite not knowing how much money is needed or where to put it. In the end, however, the increasing importance of high-speed-internet access in a pandemic-stricken world—and the unlikely chance that Congress can summon the energy and bipartisanship needed to address the question at a later date—pushed the Senate to act.

"To wait would make the perfect be the enemy of the very good," said John Horrigan, a senior fellow at the Benton Institute for Broadband and Society. "If you're going to not act until you have the best data, it's going to take a long time for you to act."

The FCC will not say when it expects to finish the new, more accurate maps. But so far the commission hasn't even completed the necessary procurement and contracting efforts. And most telecom experts believe the maps won't be ready for prime time until next year at the earliest.

"It's going to be a couple of years before really substantial amounts of money start being dug into the ground and strung up on telephone poles," said Doug Brake, the director of broadband and spectrum policy at the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation.

A lack of accurate maps could further slow broadband deployment by making it hard for states to formulate their own plans. Even once the FCC maps are completed, it will take time for state governments to digest their findings, determine where and how to spend federal dollars, and submit those plans to Washington for approval.

Some states are taking matters into their own hands. In 2020, Georgia partnered with

LightBox, a commercial real-estate-data provider, to publish their own statewide broadband map. And there's a surge of interest from other states—Pennsylvania and Maine are already working on their own maps, and Caroline Stoll, the head of sales and strategic partnership at LightBox, said the company is in talks with several more states looking to replicate Georgia's map.

"It is a very, very good use of time and resources by the states to develop their own map," said Sohn.

Beyond a lack of maps, there are other potential pitfalls in the Senate's plan to fund broadband infrastructure. Recent efforts by the federal government to finance high-speed-internet projects have been conducted through reverse auctions run by the FCC. The new plan puts individual states in charge of their buildouts, allowing for greater experimentation with funding structures and broadband technologies—states can decide whether to pursue primarily wired or wireless options, for example. But it could also open the door to overbuilding and waste.

Scott Wallsten, the president of the Technology Policy Institute, said the decision to put states in the driver's seat "is going to tremendously reduce the efficiency of the program."

"The most efficient way to allocate the money—the way you get the biggest bang for the buck—is a reverse auction," said Wallsten.

Gregory Rosston, the director of the public-policy program at Stanford University and a former FCC economist, said he expects state efforts will be spotty, with some doing a good job of planning buildouts while others fall short. He also worried that state broadband plans will be "much more subjective and subject to influence than a more centralized, transparent system."

And Brake has issues with the \$100 million minimum that each state is slated to receive for high-speed internet. He said that smaller, denser states like Connecticut may not need that much money to provide complete coverage to its citizens.

"To get something through the Senate, that's kind of the price of doing business," said Brake. "Everyone's got to get something." Still, Brake said the Senate's infrastructure deal is a marked improvement from recent proposals like the BRIDGE Act, which would've ignored the lack of broadband maps and divvied up federal funds through imprecise metrics like raw population and the percentage of rural or low-income citizens.

"I think it could be potentially more efficient if this was sort of run through a single process within the federal government," Brake said. "[But] it's improved a lot in this new version."

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I don't want this program to fall short; I want it to succeed. This amendment gives us a chance to get the money right, to take the extra time that we are going to have to take anyway to get the maps right. It is a good government amendment, a friendly amendment, and I urge bipartisan adoption of it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, with all due respect to my friend from Mississippi, I don't consider this a friendly amendment. I consider this a major departure from the agreed-upon structure of this broadband section of the bill that we are talking about.

This, as we all know, was a heavily negotiated bill. There are provisions in

it that I don't like. There are provisions in it that I wish were there that aren't there because of the negotiation.

This provision, which appears innocent, to reinsert the Administrative Procedure Act into this process would bureaucratize the process, slow it down, and would not assist in the process.

Here are some points that I think need to be made:

The first is I consider the broadband section one of the crown jewels of this entire bill. And the fact that it is structured in such a way that the grants will go to the States and the States will decide how best to administer those programs because of their knowledge of their needs in their States—yes, they are going to use maps—updated maps, I should say—from the FCC, but this is, really, a State-driven process.

The Administrative Procedure Act is principally a regulatory process, and we are not talking about a regulatory process here. We are not talking about the issuance of a lot of long and detailed regulations. We are talking about a grant program to States, and so the burdensome administrative requirements of the APA are really not necessary in this case because it is not a regulatory process.

There is already significant oversight built into the statute. There are 68 pages that have all kinds of requirements for public notice, filing online, public disclosure, comment, and involvement of communities of other providers, of all of those interested parties in this process. So it is not like it is some kind of closed process.

There is no doubt that this will slow down the process. There is no doubt that this would restrict the ability of the NTIA to tailor programs to fit individual States.

As I said, that is one of the beauties of this whole provision, is that it has the flexibility to meet the needs of States as they define them. It would hamper that State flexibility, and it would make it more difficult for the States to follow through on a timely basis to make this tremendously important.

Where the Senator and I agree—and I know how hard he has worked on this, as have I. This is, I think, one of the most important things that we can do in this bill, to get Americans connected. I don't need to make that argument. Everyone in the Chamber knows that.

The other piece, unfortunately, that this amendment would do would be enable and, in fact, invite lawsuits. There would, undoubtedly, be challenges to the regulations, challenges to the—indeed the APA said you have got to do this by regulation, you are building a whole new bureaucratic process, and the bill already provides for the kinds of protections that the Senator is talking about.

So I think this is an unnecessary amendment. I certainly, as one of those

who worked on the negotiation of the bill, don't consider it a friendly amendment, and I believe that it is a major change in the agreement that would not have been agreed to in the negotiation; and I hope my colleagues across the aisle who have supported this agreement will oppose this amendment because it is not something that was in the negotiation and it would not have been accepted by those who were negotiating it on this side of the aisle.

So with that, I strongly oppose this amendment. It is a—I don't think I can say it. It makes this a bureaucratic process that is unnecessary, will only slow and impede the distribution of these desperately needed funds to connect the people of America.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2146

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Wicker amendment, No. 2146.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 299 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Barrasso	Grassley	Rounds
Blackburn	Hagerty	Rubio
Blunt	Hawley	Sasse
Boozman	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Burr	Johnson	Shelby
Capito	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Lummis	Toomey
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Risch	

NAYS—55

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Romney
Blumenthal	Kaine	Rosen
Booker	Kelly	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Cassidy	Markey	Stabenow
Collins	Menendez	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Feinstein	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Portman	

NOT VOTING—2

Graham	Inhofe
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The amendment (No. 2146) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate,

equally divided, prior to a vote relating to the Kennedy amendment No. 2210.

The Senator from the Louisiana.

AMENDMENT NO. 2210

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, with respect to my amendment, I offer it on behalf of myself and Senator CASSIDY.

The last 18 months have been challenging for Louisiana. First, there was Hurricane Laura. Then there was Hurricane Delta. Then there was Hurricane Zeta. The hurricanes alone did about \$25 billion of damage. Then we had the historic freezes. Then we had historic flooding. The total amount of damage was \$47.1 billion.

My people are tough, but they are tired. This amendment would appropriate \$1.1 billion in community development block grants to help my people recover.

I bring you a problem but also a solution. Thanks to the efforts of Senator CANTWELL and Senator SCHATZ and myself, 3 years ago, we convinced the FCC not to give away the spectrum auction, which belongs to the American people, and instead to auction it off. There is now \$80 billion sitting in Treasury. The money for these block grants would come from that \$80 billion in cash.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, we all agree that responding to natural disasters is a core Federal responsibility. But, unfortunately, this unprecedented amendment would take funds from the Federal Communications Commission's spectrum auction revenues to pay for disaster relief.

The spectrum auction revenues my colleagues seeks to reallocate are intended to help expand high-speed internet in the United States. All Americans, no matter where they live, should have access to the 21st century economy.

We can't pick winners and losers when it comes to natural disasters. The process should be set in law, which is something my colleague from Hawaii, Senator SCHATZ, has been working on for years.

I support disaster relief, but this is not the way to do it.

My heart goes out to all Americans impacted by natural disasters, not just those affected by hurricanes but also devastating wildfires and flooding caused by climate change. I am committed to ensuring they receive the assistance they need, but we need a comprehensive solution.

I would like to yield time to my colleague from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, first, let me offer to work with both Senators from Louisiana to secure the funding that their State so desperately needs, in my capacity as ranking member of the Transportation, HUD Appropriations Subcommittee.

Louisiana has been particularly hard hit, experiencing three hurricanes al-

most back to back, and, certainly, the need for disaster assistance is clear. But we also have other States that have been affected: Alabama, California, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Oregon, Puerto Rico—a Territory, not a State, obviously. But they need help too.

What I would propose is that we work together on an emergency disaster supplemental that will take care of all these needs, including the needs of the people in hard-hit Louisiana.

I pledge my personal help and support to both of my colleagues and friends from Louisiana to bring this about.

Finally, let me just say, I am surprised that the administration has not submitted a request for supplemental disaster assistance. And I look forward to see—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time has expired.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2210

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 19, nays 79, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 300 Leg.]

YEAS—19

Blackburn	Ernst	Rubio
Blunt	Hagerty	Scott (FL)
Burr	Hawley	Sullivan
Cassidy	Hoeven	Tuberville
Cornyn	Hyde-Smith	Warnock
Cramer	Kennedy	
Cruz	Ossoff	

NAYS—79

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Risch
Barrasso	Hirono	Romney
Bennet	Johnson	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Rounds
Booker	Kelly	Sanders
Boozman	King	Sasse
Braun	Klobuchar	Schatz
Brown	Lankford	Schumer
Cantwell	Leahy	Scott (SC)
Capito	Lee	Shaheen
Cardin	Lujan	Shelby
Carper	Lummis	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Cassidy	Markey	Stabenow
Collins	Marshall	Tester
Coons	McConnell	Thune
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tillis
Cotton	Merkley	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Van Hollen
Daines	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Padilla	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	Young
Grassley	Portman	
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich		

NOT VOTING—2

Graham	Inhofe
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 19, the nays are 79.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, this amendment is rejected.

The amendment (No. 2210) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

EVICTON MORATORIUM

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, after many weeks of uncertainty and distress, millions of Americans can—for now—let go of the fear of losing their homes and the roofs over their head. Last night, the Biden administration announced a new 60-day Federal eviction moratorium. I certainly support that decision.

I want to thank all those who insisted that we do something, especially U.S. Congresswoman CORI BUSH, of Missouri, who knows the trauma, personally, of being without a home, having been a victim of eviction in her life. Representative BUSH camped out outside on the Capitol steps for 5 nights. She slept on the steps of this building so that some of the most vulnerable people in America would be able to sleep with a roof over their heads while we were made sure the law caught up with our intentions.

I also want to thank my fellow Democratic Senators, especially SHERROD BROWN and ELIZABETH WARREN, who pushed for a fair and just solution to avoid what would have been an entirely preventable tragedy for families who already lost so much in this pandemic.

As many as 11 million Americans have fallen behind on their rent during this pandemic because of job losses and other misfortunes.

Let me tell you about one of them. Patricia Vasquez. She lives in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood. She told her story to the Chicago Sun-Times. By the time Patricia Vasquez received an email on July 23 telling her that she qualified for help from Chicago's Emergency Rental Assistance Program, the gas to her apartment had already been cut off because of an overdue \$1,400 bill. She had sold some clothes and jewelry to pay the electric bill and keep the lights on, and she was 6 months behind in rent.

The Federal eviction moratorium will enable people like Patricia to avoid homelessness while they wait for emergency assistance to reach them.

Between the bipartisan CARES Act that Congress passed in December and President Biden's American Rescue Plan, Congress has provided State and local governments more than \$46 billion in emergency rental assistance to help families pay their landlords. Unfortunately, many States and localities have been slower than expected in getting that money to the people who need it. So far, only \$3 billion of the \$46 billion has reached tenants and landlords.

To punish renters who have already lost so much for delays over which they have no control and to evict them with the Delta variant tearing the

country apart would be unfair, unconscionable, and, in many cases, deleterious to public health. It would harm our efforts to bring this virus under control for good.

Fortunately, in recent weeks, many cities and States have made progress in getting the help out to the people who need it. That includes the city of Chicago and the State of Illinois.

The CDC's new eviction moratorium is only a first step. It is imperative that all State and local governments step up their efforts to get Federal relief to the families who need it and the landlords as well. This pandemic has caused enough pain. Redtape can't be allowed to deepen that pain for everyone.

IMMIGRATION

Madam President, I would like to address another issue that comes up on the floor quite regularly, usually from speeches on the other side of the aisle.

I heard one of my colleagues in the Senate on the Republican side who is a personal friend talk about it today—and he is not the only one—and it is, of course, the issue of immigration. I have been involved in this issue for a long time.

I can recall when I was first elected to the Senate, I got a phone call from Ted Kennedy. He said: I heard you are going to be on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I said: That is right.

He said: Can I ask you to be a member of my Immigration Subcommittee?

Well, how do you say no to Ted Kennedy, to start with? I was fascinated by the invitation. I got involved in the immigration debate then and over the years.

At one point, I joined three other Democratic Senators and four Republican Senators—the so-called Gang of 8—and tried to sit down and fix this broken immigration system. We actually wrote a bill, a good bill. It passed here on the floor of the Senate with 68 votes.

Senator McCain was one of the contributors to it. Senator Flake of Arizona was also one of them—Senator GRAHAM of South Carolina, Senator RUBIO of Florida, Senator SCHUMER, Senator BENNET, Senator MENENDEZ. We put our hearts and souls into that effort and put it together and brought it to the floor of the Senate and it was enacted into law.

Comprehensive immigration reform—I should say, it passed the Senate. It failed to become enacted into law because the House of Representatives, under Republican control, wouldn't bring it up for debate, let alone a vote. That was an unfortunate missed opportunity.

It just comes down to this. We have not passed a significant immigration bill in the United States of America in 35 years. Everyone but everyone concedes that our immigration system is broken. There are parts of it that are just fundamentally unfair. There are parts of it which do not serve our Na-

tion. There are certain things we ought to all agree on, Democrats and Republicans. Let me give you three that I think are the starting points.

First, we need a safe and secure border. I want to know who is coming into America and what they are bringing. In the age of terrorism, in the age of drugs, I want to know who is coming in and what they are bringing. Yes, we need border security.

Secondly, we should never knowingly allow a dangerous person to come into this country, period. If someone is here without legal protected status and they are dangerous to us, they are gone—no ifs, ands, or buts about it.

The third point is an important one as well. We cannot allow everyone in the world who wants to come into the United States to arrive tomorrow. It just won't work. We have to have an orderly process, and we ought to show some caring and humanitarian instinct in that process, too, whether it is a refugee or asylee. These are people who desperately need some safe place to be, and the United States has often opened its doors since World War II to show that kind of kindness. Our generation should do the same.

Now, there are those who come to the floor and say: Because so many people want to come into the United States, it is a mistake for us to give anybody legal status in this country because it is a green light. It is an incentive for even more to show up.

That argument, I think, is not strong, and here is why. Each year, the orderly legal process in America makes 1 million new Americans from immigrants. It happens every year. These people are following the law, every letter of it, to become legal permanent residents in America. So to say we are going to cut them off and no longer allow them to become citizens makes no sense.

Secondly, immigrants are a critical part of America. When my farmers come to me and tell me how desperately they need farmworkers, and they don't have enough immigrants to fill them, my natural reaction is, why don't you go to the Americans who live near your farms? And they say: Senator, we do. Nobody wants to do that backbreaking work of picking fruit or vegetables and all the hard labor that goes with it. We need immigrants to do it.

Two million people in our country pick our crops, 2.4 million. Did you know half of them are undocumented? That is a fact. They have come to this country and get paid to do the worst, hardest work you can imagine.

Go to a meat processing plant or a poultry processing plant—you pick it—anyplace in the United States and look at the workforce that comes out of that gate at the end of the day. The majority of them—well, I should say 40 percent across the Nation—40 percent of them are immigrants who are working in that field; tough, dangerous, hot, hard work. They do it because others

aren't lining up to do it in their place. That is part of America today. Immigrants are a critical element.

I might add one other element which is timely. Think of all the times we tune into the Olympics and look at the people who make us just beam with pride, with "USA" written across their chest on uniforms, who are winning these medals and competing on behalf of us, the United States, in the Olympics.

Suni Lee of Minnesota, who is she? Well, it turns out that she is a child of a Hmong family. The Hmong, you remember from the Vietnam era, were a people who were killed because they sided with the United States, and they were caught in the crossfire of war. Many of them settled in the United States, many in the State of Minnesota.

Here is this young woman, this daughter of refugees who is making us so proud as she stands on the podium crying her eyes out with "USA" written on her uniform, proudly holding that gold medal. We cheer her on.

Yet when it comes to the U.S. Senate, there are no cheers from some quarters. These are immigrants. Many people look at them negatively. I am not one of those people.

There has to be a better way. There has to be a humane way for us, this Nation of immigrants, for us to be able to have a system that is fair, that really is based on the three principles I mentioned: border security, no dangerous persons, and we have got to have an orderly process to come up with.

We are going to see in the next few days, I am sure, debate on the budget resolution. It is going to be, in some part, a debate on immigration policy. I am certainly ready for it. I hope my colleagues are too. I hope that they will keep an open mind to a process of creating a new immigration policy in America that really reflects our values, that is fair to the people who seek to be part of our future, and that recognizes the great heritage which the immigrants have brought to this country. I hope those people who are on the other side who don't feel as I do will take the time to meet some of these immigrant people.

Meet my Dreamers. These young people who I first started championing 20 years ago have lived lives in the shadow of doubt for decades. They were told they were undocumented; they could be deported at any moment; and yet they soldiered on. They worked hard. They went to school. They have done remarkable things, becoming doctors and nurses and teachers and entrepreneurs and even members of our military. They are amazing. They never let me down. They are just terrific young people. I think they deserve a chance to become part of America's future.

I think they have earned it, and I think we ought to have that kind of attitude in our minds when we talk about the role of immigrants in the future of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I didn't come to the floor to speak on this matter, but listening to the comments of my friend from Illinois about the contributions made by immigrants to our country, I wholeheartedly agree with him about that.

Really, when I think about immigration, I think it is really sort of the secret sauce to American success. It is the notion that you can come from anywhere, with virtually nothing, and you can legally immigrate to the United States and you can begin to get one of those very difficult jobs working in the fields, working in a meatpacking plant, or someplace else and begin your climb toward the American dream.

That, to me, is one of the crown jewels of our country. It is what makes us different. You look at other countries around the world; they don't welcome immigrants. They shun immigrants, and their economies and their countries suffer for it.

Let me just say, I agree with the Senator from Illinois about the contribution of immigrants. I listened very carefully as a border State Senator. My State is 40 percent Hispanic. I am sure the Senator from Nevada has a large Hispanic population. They are part of us. They are part of our great Nation and make tremendous contributions.

The Hispanics in my State are patriots. They volunteer in disproportionate numbers to serve in the military. They work at jobs that are very difficult. They are very tight-knit families. They are people of faith. They believe in hard work and, most fundamentally, they believe in the American dream.

But I don't think it does any tribute to their contributions or their sacrifices to say that people can come to this country without complying with our laws.

I also join in the Senator's frustration at our inability to get anything substantially done in this space, but I don't think it is good enough for us to complain about how hard it is. We are all volunteers. What we have to do is do the hard work, and we have not done it since I have been here. We have not done the hard work to try to build that consensus in order to pass meaningful immigration reform, and we need to do that. It is on us. We can't blame somebody else. We are the ones responsible. We haven't done it, and we need to do it.

But I would just point out, and the Senator from Illinois knows this, that my State has a 1,200-mile border with Mexico. This is ground zero for the humanitarian crisis that is currently appearing at the border. The Biden administration reversed a lot of the policies of the previous administration without having an alternative plan in place, and it was interpreted as laying out the welcome mat for anybody and everybody who wanted to come to the

United States. That is why we are seeing these unprecedented numbers, or at least numbers we haven't seen for 20 years, in people trying to stream across the border into the United States.

I know that there is a lot of debate about, well, should we have physical barriers at the border? The truth is, the experts, the Border Patrol, have told all of us that, yes, you have to have physical barriers in some hard-to-control places, but you also need technology, and you need boots on the ground because this is not just about people immigrating to the United States; this is about the drugs that killed 93,000 Americans last year alone, most of which come across the southern border—cocaine, meth, fentanyl, heroin, just to name a few. When we see the current crisis at the border because of this reversal of the previous administration's policies without any alternative plan in place, this is an open invitation to the cartels to take advantage of the circumstances.

What it means, as a practical matter, when so many people come across at the same time, which is what is happening now, including tens of thousands of unaccompanied children, the Border Patrol, which is the law enforcement officials who are given the mission of securing our border—they have to leave the frontline of the border to go change diapers and clean and feed these kids because there is simply not enough personnel there in order to handle this flood of humanity.

What happens when they leave the frontlines? Well, in one sector, the Border Patrol Chief told me 40 percent of their agents had to leave the frontlines, which then was a green light for the drug components, the drug smugglers, to bring the poison that killed 93,000 Americans in the United States last year alone across the border.

These criminal organizations are very sophisticated. They know exactly what they are doing. They know exactly how to exploit the vulnerabilities in our law, which is why they also have understood that if you flood tens of thousands—in 1 month alone, nearly 200,00—of people across the border, that you are going to overwhelm the system, and that if you coach the migrants to make a claim of credible fear of persecution, that you might just be put into our asylum system, which then has about 1.3, I think, million cases backlogged in our immigration courts, which means we are forced to give you a notice to appear at a future hearing so you can present your case in front of an immigration judge, and maybe, just maybe, you can make your case. As a practical matter, only about 10 percent of the people who do appear in front of an immigration judge are able to meet the legal criteria for asylum.

But here is how the cartels, how the transnational criminal organizations, have figured out how to exploit our

laws: Because we have to release people and give them a notice to appear because of the sheer volume, most of them don't show up for their court hearing. So they have succeeded because of the gaps in our law, not because of a lack of a physical barrier along the border. They are turning themselves in to the Border Patrol and making this claim of asylum because they know that they will more than likely succeed in making their way into the United States.

I don't care how many times the Vice President goes to Central America or talks about root causes of illegal immigration. I don't care how many times Director Mayorkas tells Cubans: Don't come to America because of the danger of coming overseas into our country. These organizations are smart. They are whispering in the ear of these migrants. They are saying: If you will pay us enough money, we will get you to America. And these migrants watch TV. They watch cable TV. They take phone calls and get emails from their friends and relatives in the United States. They know that this statement "don't try to come to America" is just completely inconsistent with what is happening on the ground.

So I don't think it does us any good to complain about how hard our job is or how many times we have failed to get the job done. What I am really concerned about right now is that the majority whip, who is also chairman of the Judiciary Committee, has basically told us he is going to give up on a bipartisan immigration reform bill, and they are going to try to jam this through on a purely party-line vote in this reconciliation bill, otherwise known as the reckless tax-and-spending spree.

Now, I don't expect that the Parliamentarian will allow them to do that under the rules of the Senate. This would completely circumvent the rules of the Senate, which require, on matters of substantive legislation, 60 votes to close off debate, the so-called filibuster rule.

But I couldn't resist responding to the majority whip's—the Senator from Illinois—statements about how hard our job is. I don't think it does us much good to come here and say: This is really hard. This is really hard.

Our constituents expect us to fix it, and we know how to do it if we will just do our job.

H.R. 3684

So, Madam President, on the bipartisan infrastructure bill now before the Senate, I am glad to see that the majority leader, Senator SCHUMER, is allowing amendments to be presented from folks on both sides. Senator SCHUMER had given us an artificial deadline to finish the bill, but he has also told us we are not going home until we do so, and we take him at his word. But I hope he will continue to allow this process to play out, no matter how long it takes, until this legislation is ready to be voted on. That is prin-

cipally because the process that brought this bill to the floor did not involve the regular, normal hearings and markups across multiple Senate committees. That is certainly not a criticism of the bipartisan group who has gotten us to where we are; it is really just a statement of the dysfunction of the legislative process in the Senate these days. But the fact is, the vast majority of the Senators in this Chamber did not have a hand in crafting this legislation even though it will impact every single community across the country.

I believe the bipartisan group worked in good faith to get us to the starting gate. Now it is time to allow every Senator, representing every State in the country, to weigh in and offer improvements to the bill. I have said from the beginning that an open amendment process will be critical to the success of this legislation, and that is especially true when it comes to paying for this legislation.

We are waiting for the Congressional Budget Office, the official scorer, to tell us what the costs will be and whether we have been successful in offering offsetting pay-fors. One budget expert at the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget has already forecasted a discouraging score. He estimated the bill would only raise about \$208 billion—less than half of the new spending in the bill.

But it is important for all of us to realize we are also reauthorizing the expiring surface transportation bill, which is ordinarily financed by the highway trust fund, and it is going to require another \$118 billion to shore that up because the White House has taken off the table any other pay-fors that would include a user fee on electric vehicles or indexing the gas tax or other ideas that would fill in that gap. So another \$118 billion of borrowed money is going to be necessary to fill that gap. I don't think any of us regard that as a good outcome. Maybe it is the best we can do under the circumstances.

But as it stands now, our debt to GDP, our debt to our gross domestic product ratio, is at the highest level it has been since World War II. In other words, we fought a world war to defeat imperial Japan and Nazi Germany, and we didn't ask how much it cost; we did what we had to do. We did the same thing when it came to COVID, which was a domestic equivalent, I think, of war, defeating the virus and shoring up our economy.

Our country has invested a huge amount of money in the war against COVID-19, and now is not the time to double down on out-of-control spending for a nonemergency matter. We need to find responsible ways to finance these new expenses, and I hope we will have an opportunity to vote on a range of amendments to that end.

I have been proud to work with Senator PADILLA, our new Senator from California, a Democrat, to offer an

amendment that would provide more funding for a variety of infrastructure projects, including roads, bridges, and public transit. What it does is it gives State and local leaders more authority when it comes to identifying and investing in the greatest needs of their States and their communities. And here is the kicker: It does so without increasing the deficit one penny. That is because it gives State and local leaders the ability to spend COVID relief funding that they already have on infrastructure projects that might otherwise be neglected. They are not required to do so, but our amendment would allow them to do so rather than to claw that money back when the appropriation sunsets or to put guardrails on it and say you can only use it for some prescribed uses, which, frankly, they have more money to spend than they know what to do with when it comes to those authorized uses.

As folks hunkered down in their home to slow the spread of the virus, the change in travel patterns hurt more than airlines and hotels; it put a serious dent in State and local transportation budgets in all of our States. State departments of transportation are facing an estimated \$18 billion in shortfalls through 2024. Leaders across the country have had to delay or cancel critical transportation projects because of a lack of funding, and it is unclear when those projects may get back on track.

I might say that one of the things we have seen with the eviction moratorium expiring is that \$46 billion of money we appropriated last year still hasn't gotten to the intended beneficiary, to the people who are trying to pay their rent but can't pay their rent. So we have a huge problem, logistical problem, in voting on money and actually getting it to the intended beneficiary. That is true in COVID-19. That is true in disaster relief. The type of thing that Senator PADILLA and I are suggesting is to take money that is already in the hands of the State and local governments and let them use it so they can do it quickly on investments which will last and endure rather than just spend it on operating expenses.

There is an urgent need for more transportation funding, and that is exactly what our amendment would provide. There is no mandate, as I said, that it be spent for a single transportation project. If a city or a State or a county has plans to use their funds on pandemic-related expenses, those plans will not be interrupted or called into question. It simply provides our local leaders what they have asked each of us for most, and it starts with flexibility.

If a city is experiencing a spike in COVID cases and needs to use Federal funding to buy additional ICU bedspace or hire new healthcare workers, they can and they should move forward with those plans. This is not about cutting resources that are needed. But we

know that many States and localities simply don't have enough qualifying expenses to use the money that they have been given. They are looking for ways to spend the dollars they already have as given to them in the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan.

That is not to say they don't want this funding; they just want to be able to use it consistent with the guardrails that Congress has provided, and that is what our amendment will allow.

The broad support for this amendment is a testament to the importance of these changes. Our amendment has been endorsed by two dozen organizations that represent a diverse range of stakeholders, from the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations—all of which advocate on behalf of cities across the country.

We have also received endorsements from the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, which represents all facets of the transportation construction industry, as well as the American Public Transportation Association. It also includes organizations that advocate for safer roads, like the American Traffic Safety Services Association.

I have been pleased to find common ground with Senator PADILLA and our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help build support for this amendment and, I think, actually enhance the work done by the bipartisan negotiating group.

This is not something they were able to get done in that negotiating group—they have told me—even though it was a subject of discussion. So now it is a chance for the rest of us, on a bipartisan basis, to weigh in and make this bill better.

Throughout the process, we have made adjustments so States with unique, but no less important, infrastructure needs can put this funding toward those uses. We are in the process of making some final tweaks to ensure that we receive broad bipartisan support, as well as that of the White House, and I hope we will have a vote on this amendment on the Senate floor soon.

Our amendment will empower local officials to make the best decisions for their communities and ensure that taxpayers get the most bang for their buck with these relief funds that have already been appropriated; and then, if we do not authorize their use in the manner I have described, will likely be spent on annual or reoccurring expenses rather than on something that will endure for a long time, like infrastructure.

So I hope our amendment will come to a vote in the Senate very soon. There is no reason—there is no reason—to rush the amendment process and to cut off good amendments for a vote or consideration that will actually improve this legislation. There are a lot of great ideas out there to strength-

en this bill, to maximize the impact of every dollar, and pay for these investments responsibly.

So let me just close by saying I appreciate the hard work that has gone into this bill so far, and I hope we will continue to have more opportunities to improve it as the amendment process goes forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The junior Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, I want to take some time to share some of my thoughts on this Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that we are debating today, and I wasn't intending to speak specifically to the amendment Senator CORNYN just brought up, but I just can't resist saying: Man, I wish you well.

I think when—a bipartisan solution, like Senator CORNYN and Senator PADILLA have come up with, to provide flexibility to our Governors and our communities just makes all the sense in the world.

So I am looking forward to voting yes, and I hope we can get a resolution that allows at least 59 of my closest friends to do the same.

I want to start out by thanking Senators PORTMAN and SINEMA for providing such incredible leadership, and to the group of bipartisan Senators who negotiated and coordinated this incredible effort.

I also want to thank Senator CAPITO, who is managing, of course, this floor process, along with Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman TOM CARPER. The progress that they have made on this issue with the administration earlier this year, paired with the excellent leadership that they provided the committee, really exemplifies what is possible when we work together, and it has allowed us to get to this point.

Reviving America's roads and bridges is a longstanding national priority of Congress, and is one that has taken us too long to address. We need reliable, accessible infrastructure to operate locally and to compete globally; and as it currently stands, the bill before us is well positioned to meet that exact need.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act isn't perfect—no bill ever is—but it makes historic investments in assets that will benefit every American for many, many years.

I applaud the group for using the surface transportation bill that we unanimously passed out of the Environment and Public Works Committee as the foundation for this bill. As the lead Republican on the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee, I know how much time and effort both sides of the aisle have put in to surface transportation reauthorization. The end result reflected the good work we accomplished, and it was the perfect building block for the package that is before us.

As you know, I was not an original part of this bipartisan negotiating

group. However, when I was approached for my input, I made my top priorities clear:

One, keeping the permitting reforms in our bill—permitting reforms like the one-agency decision that was a rule that President Trump put into place, that President Biden removed his first day in office. It is codified in this bill for surface transportation;

Prioritizing dedicating funding to States and to their departments of transportation as part of the traditional formula for distribution;

Limiting the expansion of urban transit programs; and

Including the bipartisan bill that Senator LUJÁN and I introduced to clean up orphaned and abandoned oil and gas wells.

I was glad to see these provisions, as well as our committee's Drinking and Wastewater Infrastructure Act, in the bill.

I also appreciate the use of unspent COVID-19 relief funds to help pay for these priorities rather than being used for paying people to not work and adding fuel to the fire of inflation. This does just the opposite.

I thank my colleagues for asking for my opinion, and I am even more grateful that they listened and included these provisions in our final product.

Infrastructure has been a priority for Congress because it is a priority for our constituents. America cannot succeed without a robust infrastructure from one coast to the other and all the places, like North Dakota, in between. We need roads and bridges to go from farm to town and from town to city, from city to city, and State to State.

We use ports and waterways and railroads to move the products that we produce to places they could otherwise never get to. We use rail and air to connect with family and friends and other business associates around the world. And we use broadband connectivity to facilitate transactions, both personal and business.

Infrastructure is foundational to our way of life, and it is the constitutional responsibility of the Federal Government to facilitate interstate commerce, including the movement of goods and services along our highways and byways and waterways and railways.

Rural States, like North Dakota, know this better than most. In fact, Rugby, ND, is literally the geographical center of the North American continent. We are landlocked, and we rely on our transportation infrastructure to get where we need to go and, more importantly, to move the products that we produce to where they need to get.

For example, North Dakota is the top producer of durum wheat, which gets ground into semolina flour, which becomes the main ingredient in pasta. The wheat goes from the field to a grain elevator by a farm road, to a mill by rail, and to a processing plant by both, and then it goes anywhere from a

grocery store in California to a restaurant in New York, or perhaps overseas to a market far away.

And just like every other commodity we produce, it requires a reliable infrastructure system that is safe and sufficient for every single mile on the journey.

The United States needs rural America, and rural America needs infrastructure. The personal needs it fulfills and the economic benefits it delivers are obvious. Rather than investing trillions of taxpayer dollars on government handouts to people to not work, we can spend money on putting people to work, revitalizing a system that directly benefits all of us, and that is what the plan before us would help accomplish.

It is not perfect—no bill is, as I said—and there are parts of it that I don't support, but there are parts, I know, that some of my colleagues do not support, even though they are top priorities for me.

Our Founding Fathers intended for Congress to collaborate and find common ground. Those are functions of our system; they are not a side effect. It is easy to imagine if every Founder had demanded to get everything they wanted and nothing else, well, then we would have had a king, and we may not have had the system of cooperative Federalism that we do today. And if enough of them believed that doing nothing is better than getting 80 or 90 percent of what they wanted or—then our more perfect Union would never have gotten started and had a chance to become that.

The inability to meet in the middle is not an excuse for inaction, especially when it comes to addressing not just the pressing needs of the American people here at home, but also protecting our standing as a country on the world stage.

We understand how important infrastructure is, but so does China, so does Russia, so do all of our adversaries who would like to see us continue to fall behind. The Chinese Communist Party would love to see America's roads and bridges crumble. They would be happy to let infrastructure get in the way of American production and allow for them to meet the needs of the global economy in our absence.

The bill that we have before us gives us an opportunity to help stop that from happening.

Now, while I am all for working across the aisle, that doesn't mean I will support bills that I fundamentally disagree with, like the \$3.5 trillion-plus spending bill that Senate Democrats plan to cobble together after we finish this bipartisan infrastructure bill.

I oppose the Democrats' reckless tax-and-spend agenda, and I will join each of my Republican colleagues in opposing it and offering amendments to change its harmful outcomes.

That bill is completely separate from the bipartisan infrastructure bill that we are talking about today. They are

not tied together, despite what rhetoric there may be otherwise. Both should be considered on their own merits separately.

What a shame it would be for Democrats to offer the American public a glimpse of bipartisanship and cooperation to only do an about-face and hold it hostage while they jam through a massive tax increase and growth of the Federal Government, adding to inflation.

I hope my colleagues will choose to build on this bipartisan success and resist the urge to follow the partisan whims of their political base.

As it stands, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act would be a significant win for our country. I know it would be for my State. So far we have avoided adding poison pills or derailing the process, and I urge my colleagues to keep it that way.

North Dakota needs safe and sufficient infrastructure. America needs safe and sufficient infrastructure. And the world needs the United States to have safe and sufficient infrastructure.

I urge my colleagues to keep the negative parts of the bill in perspective and to appreciate the opportunity we have today to make a difference for our constituents.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. ROMNEY. Madam President, the remarks of my colleague from North Dakota have inspired me to stand and join him; and also the fact that we are in a room of great significance and silence reigns, and I hate just to fill it with words, but I think the topic we are talking about is extremely important.

I appreciate the good Senator's support and effort in helping craft this legislation—this bipartisan legislation to improve our infrastructure in our country.

I also salute the leadership on both sides of the aisle for allowing a robust amendment process.

There is no question but that there are many opportunities to improve the legislation as written. The chance for our colleagues to offer adjustments and improvements is a part of our tradition and a good part of our tradition.

I would concur that we do need to upgrade our infrastructure. I think most Americans who have experienced our infrastructure would come to the same conclusion. Too often, our roads are in need of repair. Many times, we have communities that are not connected with high-speed travel opportunities from one part of the city to another. Our transit, in some cases, is old, slow, and does not reach communities that need it.

Our rail system, particularly in the northeast, which is an important corridor for travel, is way out of date. Some people know you can drive between some cities. Where there are trains, you can drive faster than you can take the train.

We have structurally deficient and dangerous bridges, in some cases, that need to be repaired. So I think there is general agreement on both sides of the aisle that we need to improve our infrastructure.

It is known by people in this country, and I think particularly brought home to us, if you travel in other countries and see what they are doing and then you compare where we are—you would think: Boy, we used to lead the world in these things, and now we are not. And it is having an impact on our productivity as a nation because of additional travel time necessary for us to get to and from work as well as other endeavors.

If that is going to happen, we have only two options right now and probably for the indefinite future. Right now, we have a circumstance where my party is in the minority—not by much. We are basically tied here in the Senate, although the tie is broken by the Vice President. So the Democrats have the majority in the Senate, in the House, and, of course, with the White House. Given that circumstance, it is possible for the Democrats to write an infrastructure bill all by themselves and simply pass it through a process known as reconciliation. That is one option.

The other option is to work together on a bipartisan basis, where we craft a better bill with the input of Republicans and Democrats. That is the option that is before us now.

There is not a third alternative, which is Republicans only draft the bill. I would love that alternative, but it is just not available to us because we don't hold the House, the Senate, and the White House. So we have two options. Do we want our Democrat colleagues to draft a bill all by themselves or do we want to work together with Republicans and Democrats and fashion something that is bipartisan.

Now, I note that when you work in a bipartisan basis, there are some things the Democrats will want to include that we Republicans would rather not have there, and it is obvious that that is the case. I am sure that is the case for Democrats as well. They will see things that we have included that they just as soon would not have there. And it is very easy for either side—or both sides, rather—to point out the things in the bipartisan bill that they don't like and to attack it as not being fully in conformity with their views. But that is the nature of two parties working together.

Now, some would say: We could do better. Let's have another alternative, a different bipartisan approach.

My answer is: Go at it. Have at it.

No one is keeping people from working together if they want to come up with a better piece of legislation. Boy, I would be anxious to see what it is. But in order to get a bill passed, it must be acceptable to Democrats and Republicans. And that is unless, in my party, we are able to have Republicans

in the majority in the House and the Senate, and the White House, which we don't have at this stage.

So, again, the alternative is, if you can come up with a better bipartisan bill, do it. Two, amend it as you feel appropriate—and I think there are good amendments that are coming forward that I have supported and will support going forward. But we must not let the desire for perfection on the part of people like myself overcome the desire to have a good bill ultimately reached.

I think it is actually counter-productive for either side to take attack shots at the items in the bill they don't like. Instead, bring forward amendments. See if you can improve the bill. If you can't do that, come up with a bill that has bipartisan support, because that is the only alternative we face, other than a bill drafted exclusively by Democrats.

I, for one, think this bill is a good bill, on balance. It will be good for my State. I think it will be good for every State. We will get an upgrade—a badly needed upgrade—in the infrastructure of this country.

Again, is it ideal, perfect? Far from it, but it is a big step forward and one heck of a huge step of advantage relative to having one party alone write a piece of legislation. I think it is fair to say if Democrats alone write an infrastructure bill, my State of Utah won't be real happy by the time it is done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I am here on the floor today to speak in support of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which is the bipartisan legislation that is before the Chamber that will make historic investments in our Nation's core infrastructure, and I am pleased to follow my colleague and friend from Utah, Senator ROMNEY, who was one of those whom I worked with to help negotiate this package.

This is historic legislation that provides \$550 billion in new Federal investments over the next 5 years to respond to the needs that are facing our country. This bill will rebuild crumbling roads and bridges and tunnels across the country. It will provide clean drinking water in homes and address harmful contaminants. It will increase connectivity in our communities to bring broadband to even the most rural parts of our country. It will prioritize sustainable solutions to improve our infrastructure systems for future generations. And it will combat climate change by making the monumental investments in our clean energy grid and electric vehicle infrastructure that we must make.

Now, this bill was a long time in the making, as I am sure my colleague from Utah would agree. Over the past 3 months, there have been many late nights, early mornings, and countless conversations about how to make the best use of this opportunity to invest in our Nation's infrastructure.

I very much appreciate the continued good faith and negotiations from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and the White House and the leadership of Senators KYRSTEN SINEMA and ROB PORTMAN to deliver this bipartisan infrastructure agreement. I also appreciate the work of the chairs and ranking members of relevant Senate committees who laid the foundation for so much of the bipartisan work that has gone into this bill, as well as the leadership of both parties for giving us the space and time to get this agreement to the floor.

Now, I could spend all day talking about the many aspects of this legislation that meaningfully invest in our communities and in our country, but today I want to specifically talk about two key areas that I worked on. Both of these issues, water and broadband, speak to the critical needs in New Hampshire and across the country.

Water and wastewater infrastructure is one of the major investments we make in this bill, with \$55 billion invested in this area. Now, no parent should have to worry about the safety of their family's water when they turn on the tap, but, unfortunately, as most of us know, this is not the case for too many Americans, because compromised water supplies, due in part to our rundown water infrastructure, is an issue across this country and in some places in New Hampshire.

This was a problem for decades before the pandemic hit, but looking at a crisis like COVID-19 has illustrated just how basic and essential clean and safe drinking water is for our communities. Righting this wrong starts with investing in our water systems, which have been severely underfunded for too long.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, drinking water utilities will need to invest \$472.6 billion over the next 20 years in order to provide safe and sufficient drinking water to the American public. Well, fortunately, we have a big chunk of that as a down payment in this proposal. And earlier this year, the Senate passed overwhelmingly, on a bipartisan vote, the Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act. That bill makes a historic investment in our water infrastructure through authorizations. And in addition to putting significant funding toward that effort, the bipartisan infrastructure package before us includes \$15 billion to replace lead service lines, which is a huge public health priority, and it is an issue that has long plagued communities across this country.

Another real public health concern that is addressed in this bill is the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, in our water supplies. Preventing exposure, cleaning up contaminated sites, and understanding the full scope of the health implications associated with these chemicals is critical for so many affected by PFAS in their water.

As I have heard again and again from New Hampshire families, discovering

that you have been drinking contaminated water can produce a range of emotions from anger and fear to guilt. That is what I heard from so many parents who had children at the former Pease Air Force Base, where they were in childcare, and parents thought they were safe in those childcare centers. But they found out that they had been drinking water contaminated with PFAS. That contamination at the former Pease Air Force Base forced the city of Portsmouth to shut off three drinking water wells in 2014. The contamination was created by the use of firefighting foam by the Air Force when Pease was an Air Force base.

One of those wells that was shut down, the Haven well, has just come back online this week, after 7 years. It was inoperable for 7 years.

PFAS contamination surrounding the Saint-Gobain manufacturing plant in Merrimack, NH, and in areas around the Coakley Landfill Superfund site in the Seacoast create an ongoing worry for Granite State families also because of PFAS contamination. So you can imagine what those parents felt like when they found out that their children had an elevated level of PFAS in their bloodstream, and they didn't really understand what that meant.

I remember talking to one mother who told me she had taken her daughter to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center for her health exam, and she talked to the doctor about the elevated levels of PFAS in her blood. She said: The doctor didn't know what I was talking about, because this is an emerging contaminant.

But thanks to the work of so many of those affected—people like Andrea Amico in Portsmouth, who helped found a group called Testing for Pease, and folks involved with the Merrimack Citizens for Clean Water—they have raised awareness and worked to find solutions to clean up our drinking water. We owe it to them, to all of those families affected by PFAS and contaminated water supplies, a serious commitment to stop this problem where it starts and to give them the peace of mind that they so deserve. The comprehensive measures to address our water infrastructure that are contained in this historic bill will help do just that.

Now, water infrastructure is a serious issue that New Hampshire shares with many other States throughout the country. Like water, another shared issue is access to broadband or high-speed internet service.

The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic—just as I highlighted the challenge of not having enough access to clean water—highlighted just how important it is for our communities to have fast and reliable access to the internet. Whether we like it or not, we live in a digital world. We all relied on that digital world more than ever during the COVID crisis so that our kids could go to school, so our grandparents and families could keep their medical

appointments, and so our businesses could stay afloat. Of course, even before the pandemic started, the digital divide created an equity issue that deepened disparities in education, health, and business.

If you live in a community in northern New Hampshire, how can you attract business to your community if you don't have access to high-speed internet, if the business can't open a website and tell people what they do?

Just last month, I met with representatives from several towns in southwestern New Hampshire, another part of our State where they have been struggling to bring high-speed internet service to their residents. Due to their rural nature, these towns and others like them are unable to attract a provider to work with them. About a quarter of those that live in these towns are considered unserved and far more are underserved.

At that session, I talked to a woman named Molly Miller. She is a telecommunications committee member from Hancock, NH, a town with about 1,600 residents. She talked about the challenges that her family had experienced trying to work and do school from home during the pandemic. She said everyone had to disconnect while her youngest son was participating in college classes, and she shared a story about her son. She said: He was unable to turn in his final exam from one of his courses because the file was too large. He couldn't print it because they didn't have enough speed—download speed in their house. By the time he made it to the library to print out the file, it was too late. His exam was not accepted.

That is just the kind of everyday challenges that families, who don't have access to high-speed internet, face. And broadband access isn't a partisan priority. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle recognize the need for significant investments to ensure that all of our workers, our students, and our families are able to connect to the critical resources that are provided by the internet.

This infrastructure bill commits \$65 billion to bring high-speed internet to communities in New Hampshire and all across the country. These bold investments are what we need to create jobs, to enhance the safety of our infrastructure networks, and to improve this Nation's competitiveness.

Now, had I written the bill before us on my own, I am sure, like everyone in this Chamber, it would have included different priorities than what is before us in some cases. But, as we know, that is not how the give and take of negotiations work. It is not how compromise works. You give and you get. And the fact is that New Hampshire and the United States are going to get a whole lot in this infrastructure package.

We also know that legislation that has broad bipartisan support stands a better chance at lasting longer without

threats of being repealed or reversed. President Biden supports this package, and we have received strong support across the aisle through the procedural votes that we have had so far.

I am proud to have worked with my colleagues to help craft this bipartisan bill, and over the coming days, I know that I will work with even more people in this Chamber as we try and move this legislation through the Senate. Thank you. I look forward to a strong, positive vote by the end of this week.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CATTLE RANCHERS

Mr. HAWLEY. I rise today, Mr. President, to talk about the challenges facing the cattle ranchers in my State and across the country, challenges not just to their day-to-day operations but to their very livelihoods, and I rise today to talk about what we can do about it.

I have a simple message: We can take action today that will work and we can take action that will make a difference and we should take it now.

The situation that faces our cattle ranchers in Missouri and around the country, and, for that matter, many other livestock producers, is very, very serious, and the situation is, frankly, untenable. Let me tell you what I am talking about.

Just in the last year, the cost to consumers for beef has increased by double digits. That is year-on-year, from 2019 to 2020, a double-digit increase. What has happened, though, to cattle ranchers, to those who actually raise the beef, who raise the cattle, and then sell it to market? The price for them, has it gone up? No, it has gone down. In fact, over the last decade, cattle ranchers have seen their share of profits decline by double digits.

So what is happening here? Cattle ranchers are getting less, much less, in some instances—and, by the way, so are other producers of livestock—and yet the cost to consumers is going up. Somebody is getting wealthy in this transaction, and that "somebody" is the packers, the processing companies.

In America today, our meat processing supply chain, equipment—the entire apparatus—is owned by just a small handful of companies.

Here is what I am talking about: Four companies—four—together control over 80 percent of this country's beef processing operations, 80 percent. Even more remarkably, three of the giant meatpacking companies control 63 percent of pork producing, 46 of beef packing, 38 of poultry producing. That is just three of them. And two—two—are based in Brazil and China. So you

have got four major packers that control 80 percent of the market, two of them based overseas.

This market concentration is squeezing out the farmers and the ranchers. It is enriching the packers, and it is ultimately hurting consumers. So I say, again, in this system, the only people who seem to win are the monopolists. We have got to do something about it.

It is made even worse—the situation—by the fact that these same monopoly packers have been found guilty or otherwise pled to criminal violations, criminal uses of their monopoly status.

For example, Pilgrim's Pride, a subsidiary of a Brazilian-owned company called JBS, received \$107 million in criminal fines for price-fixing in chicken markets. JBS separately paid out at least three multimillion-dollar settlements over the past year, while Smithfield, which is owned by China, has paid \$83 million to settle pork price-fixing allegations.

So here we have these monopoly companies, two of them foreign owned, that are controlling the meat processing industry, controlling the entire supply chain, squeezing American farmers and ranchers, raising prices on consumers, and committing criminal violations while they do it.

Now, many have called, including me, for antitrust investigations. Some have called, including me, for antitrust prosecution. And I stand behind those positions.

But I am here today to say that we must do more. And, specifically, it is time for this administration, the Biden administration, to do more because they have the tools to do so at their disposal.

Under Federal law, the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, has the authority to refuse to provide or to withdraw inspection services from any of these monopoly packers or anyone who is reasonably connected to them who has been convicted of a felony or any other act or circumstance that indicates a lack of integrity as it concerns public health.

That is a broad grant of authority. What it means is that USDA could, right now, begin to suspend the inspection services for these monopoly companies, to say to these companies: We are not going to allow inspections to go forward; we are not going to allow your production to go forward until you come to the table and agree to resolve and desist any criminal misconduct and to get a better deal to ranchers and farmers across this country.

This authority is already existing under Federal law. I want to be clear. It is already on the books. It is already provided for by Federal statute. And our ranchers and our farmers need it to be used, and they need it to be used now.

So, today, I am calling on the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, to invoke these authorities, say to the major monopoly companies that USDA

will suspend inspection services until they come to the table, until they open their books, until our cattle ranchers and our farmers in Missouri and across this country get relief.

I am making that request to the Secretary of Agriculture today. I hope that he will act today because our farmers and our ranchers deserve relief today, and they deserve our help and our support as they work to protect the life that they lead, the life that is the backbone, in many ways, of this country, and as they continue their noble work of feeding the world.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up to the substitute and be reported by number: Peters-Rounds, 2464; Lankford, 2233; Cardin-Wicker, 2478; Daines, 2449; and Scott, 2338, CBO inflation verification; further, that at 4:15 p.m. today, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no amendments in order to the amendments prior to a vote in relation to the amendments, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption of the amendments listed, with up to 4 minutes equally divided prior to the first four votes and up to 7 minutes for Senator SCOTT of Florida and 2 minutes for opponents prior to the Scott vote.

Mr. President, let me amend that request to 4:25—not 4:15 but 4:25. I ask unanimous consent to make that modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2464 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. PETERS, proposes an amendment numbered 2464 to Amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To modify certain provisions relating to cybersecurity)

In section 4012(b)(1) of subtitle B of title I of division D, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), strike “consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and” and insert “coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with”.

In section 4012(c) of subtitle B of title I of division D, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), strike “consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and” and insert “coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with”.

In section 40122(b) of subtitle B of title I of division D, strike “consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and” and insert “coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with”.

In section 40122(c) of subtitle B of title I of division D, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), strike “consultation with the Sec-

retary of Homeland Security and” and insert “coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with”.

In section 40124(b) of subtitle B of title I of division D, strike “consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security,” and insert “coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with”.

In section 40125(b)(1) of subtitle B of title I of division D, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), strike “consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and” and insert “coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with”.

In section 40125(d)(1) of subtitle B of title I of division D, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), strike “consultation” and insert “coordination”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2233 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. LANKFORD, proposes an amendment numbered 2233 to Amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit Federal funding for any entity that fails to enroll in and comply with the E-Verify Program)

At the appropriate place in division I, insert the following:

SEC. ____ E-VERIFY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT.

(a) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, Federal assistance, grants, subgrants, contracts, and subcontracts authorized under this Act may only be awarded to entities that have enrolled in, and maintain compliance with all statutes, regulations, and policies regarding the E-Verify Program described in section 403(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note).

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Any entity that has not previously enrolled in, or had enrolled but did not maintain compliance with all statutes, regulations, and policies regarding the E-Verify Program shall enroll in and certify compliance with such statutes, regulations and policies before being eligible to receive any Federal assistance, grants, subgrants, contracts, or subcontracts authorized under this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 2478 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. CARDIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2478 to Amendment No. 2137.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

AMENDMENT NO. 2449 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. DAINES, proposes an amendment numbered 2449 to Amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide additional funds for post-fire restoration activities and restoration activities carried out using good neighbor agreements)

Beginning on page 1799, strike line 13 and all that follows through page 1800, line 10, and insert the following:

(15) \$300,000,000 shall be made available for post-fire restoration activities that are implemented not later than 3 years after the date that a wildland fire is contained, of which—

(A) \$125,000,000 shall be made available to the Secretary of the Interior; and

(B) \$175,000,000 shall be made available to the Secretary of Agriculture;

On page 1800, line 11, strike “(17)” and insert “(16)”.

On page 1800, line 17, strike “(18)” and insert “(17)”.

On page 1816, strike lines 1 through 12 and insert the following:

(2) \$300,000,000 shall be made available to provide to States and Indian Tribes for implementing restoration projects on Federal land pursuant to good neighbor agreements entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) or agreements entered into under section 2(b) of the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3115a(b)), of which—

(A) \$60,000,000 shall be made available to the Secretary of the Interior; and

(B) \$240,000,000 shall be made available to the Secretary of Agriculture;

On page 2568, line 12, strike “\$905,000,000” and insert “\$925,000,000”.

On page 2568, line 15, strike “\$337,000,000” and insert “\$341,000,000”.

On page 2568, line 17, strike “\$142,000,000” and insert “\$146,000,000”.

On page 2568, line 18, strike “\$142,000,000” and insert “\$146,000,000”.

On page 2568, line 20, strike “\$142,000,000” and insert “\$146,000,000”.

On page 2568, line 22, strike “\$142,000,000” and insert “\$146,000,000”.

On page 2570, line 19, strike “\$1,055,000,000” and insert “\$980,000,000”.

On page 2570, line 23, strike “\$327,000,000” and insert “\$312,000,000”.

On page 2570, line 25, strike “\$182,000,000” and insert “\$167,000,000”.

On page 2608, line 17, strike “\$2,115,000,000” and insert “\$2,095,000,000”.

On page 2608, line 21, strike “\$587,000,000” and insert “\$583,000,000”.

On page 2608, line 23, strike “\$382,000,000” and insert “\$378,000,000”.

On page 2613, line 18, strike “\$696,200,000” and insert “\$771,200,000”.

On page 2613, line 23, strike “\$552,200,000” and insert “\$567,200,000”.

On page 2613, line 24, strike “\$36,000,000” and insert “\$51,000,000”.

On page 2614, line 1, strike \$36,000,000 and insert “\$51,000,000”.

On page 2614, line 3, strike “\$36,000,000” and insert “\$51,000,000”.

On page 2614, line 4, strike “\$36,000,000” and insert “\$51,000,000”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2338 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. SCOTT of Florida, proposes an amendment numbered 2338 to Amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit funds from being disbursed or obligated if the Congressional Budget Office determines that such disbursement or obligation would result in an increase in inflation)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ INCREASES IN INFLATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds made available by this Act may be disbursed or obligated unless the Congressional Budget Office certifies, not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act, that such funds would not result in an increase in any fiscal year to the baseline forecast for the Consumer Price Index, All Urban Consumers in the most recent 10-year economic outlook publication of the Congressional Budget Office.

(b) RESULT OF INCREASE.—If the Congressional Budget Office does not make the certification under subsection (a), the funds

shall be transferred to the general fund of the Treasury to be used only for deficit reduction.

AMENDMENT NO. 2464

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the Peters-Rounds amendment, No. 2464.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to urge adoption of the Peters-Rounds amendment, No. 2464.

I first want to thank Chairman MANCHIN and Ranking Member BARRASSO of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee for working with me on this amendment. I would also like to thank Senators ROUNDS, PORTMAN, and WARNER for joining me in offering this amendment.

It is very straightforward. It simply would align several cyber security provisions for the Department of Energy in this infrastructure legislation with existing law. It would require the Department of Energy, the sector risk management Agency for the energy sector, to coordinate with the Department of Homeland Security on cyber security efforts.

DHS is the lead Federal Agency for cyber security, and they have a central role to play in working across the government to strengthen our cyber defenses. As we have seen from the damaging SolarWinds and Microsoft Exchange attacks, a whole-of-government approach is necessary to protect critical infrastructure.

This amendment will ensure that there is a comprehensive approach that effectively coordinates our cyber security protections for critical infrastructure across all sectors. It reduces duplication of efforts and helps protect our Nation from the persistent threat posed by cyber attacks.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support this straightforward, bipartisan amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise to support the Senator's motion and the amendment. This is a case where we are trying to eliminate the silos within the Federal Government. When it comes to cyber security, this is a really good example of one where you have multiple Agencies trying to work together.

This makes it very clear that it is not just a matter of discussing or consulting but, rather, that it will be a coordinated effort. It recognizes once again that the Department of Homeland Security and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency are taking the lead role.

With that, I would offer my full support as well.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I yield back all remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2464

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2464.

Mr. PETERS. I would ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 301 Leg.]

YEAS—96

Baldwin	Hagerty	Peters
Barrasso	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Hawley	Reed
Blackburn	Heinrich	Risch
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blunt	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Hoeven	Rounds
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Braun	Johnson	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Sasse
Burr	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	Kennedy	Schumer
Capito	King	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Klobuchar	Scott (SC)
Carper	Lankford	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Shelby
Cassidy	Lee	Sinema
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Lummis	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Sullivan
Cotton	Markey	Tester
Cramer	Marshall	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	Menendez	Toomey
Daines	Merkley	Tuberville
Duckworth	Moran	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Ernst	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Fischer	Ossoff	Wicker
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Paul	Young

NAYS—2

Cornyn Whitehouse

NOT VOTING—2

Graham Inhofe

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). On this vote, the yeas are 96, the nays are 2.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2464) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the vote in relation to Lankford amendment No. 2233.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask the clock not start running right away. Senator CAPITO and I want to just raise an issue with the Chair and our colleagues.

That last vote took about 50 minutes—50 minutes—and they are getting longer, not shorter.

And Senator CAPITO and I want to use this as an opportunity just to start a conversation amongst our colleagues, see if we can't do better than that, maybe a lot better than that.

So start thinking about it, and we would be interested to hear from you.

Mrs. CAPITO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would just like to add my voice with the chairman of the EPW Committee.

I think, in consideration of everybody's time, we have got four more amendments and maybe more. We could roll through these if we would just be concise with the time and come in and vote on time.

So if we don't, we might look for more punitive measures; right, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CARPER. You never know. We might do some voice votes. That would be good.

All right. We thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

AMENDMENT NO. 2233

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I have an amendment that we are calling up. It is a very straightforward amendment.

This deals simply with how we handle E-Verify. The E-Verify system is very simple and straightforward. It has been used all over the country. It is a nonpartisan issue that we have used for decades now.

It verifies whether the people that we are actually hiring, and all this purchasing that we are doing, this massive billions of dollars will actually be—the simple, straightforward piece of it is, we are putting billions of dollars into our economy right now. We are doing a lot of infrastructure with this bill.

The promise should be that we are not just buying American, but we are actually hiring Americans as well. This is a bipartisan issue, quite frankly.

President Biden, just today, released a statement that this is a once-in-a-generation investment in our infrastructure and will create good-paying union jobs, repairing our roads and bridges, replacing lead pipes, building energy transmission lines.

It invests in clean energy, manufacturing, and zero-emission vehicles, ensuring that the jobs in the clean energy industry are good-paying, quality American jobs. That is a great promise to be able to make, and it is a great statement to make.

What this amendment does is to make sure it actually is American jobs. We know there is a tremendous pull factor with the American good-paying jobs that are out there. This E-Verify requirement puts in place, both for the contractors and subcontractors, they will actually be American citizens.

So, with that, I ask support for this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, if you like Federal mandates, here is one.

Senator LANKFORD wants a Federal mandate to require that anyone who receives a grant from this bill has to sign up for E-Verify.

Well, what does that mean?

It means a school district in my home State that ended up getting a grant under this bill for energy-efficient improvements, renewable energy improvements at public school facilities would now be required by the Lankford amendment, the Federal mandate, to have E-Verify to check out the cafeteria workers in the school district. Is that what we really want to do?

Well, how good is E-Verify? Some States have done it voluntarily. Eight of them have done it for all or most employers. You think if you run all these employees through the E-Verify process, how good is it?

Well, I can tell you how good it is. Do you know how many illegal aliens you find when you go through E-Verify? One percent. One percent.

So he is creating a Federal mandate and regulations on districts that are just trying to get energy improvements and reduce their costs and putting in an E-Verify requirement to get those illegal aliens.

Well, it turns out that isn't the situation at all. It is a mandate that is unnecessary. I beg my colleagues to give these school districts and others no more redtape but less redtape.

Please oppose the Lankford amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, are there any of my 2 minutes left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Nineteen seconds remaining.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, this is not just a mandate; this is just a statement, if we are going to put American tax dollars in place, that we are actually hiring Americans to do it.

If we are going to build America, let's also hire Americans in the process. That shouldn't be inconsistent with our basic values.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2233

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2233.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 302 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Barrasso	Capito	Crapo
Blackburn	Cassidy	Cruz
Blunt	Collins	Daines
Boozman	Cornyn	Ernst
Braun	Cotton	Fischer
Burr	Cramer	Grassley

Hagerty	Marshall	Scott (FL)
Hassan	McConnell	Scott (SC)
Hawley	Moran	Shelby
Hoeben	Murkowski	Sullivan
Hyde-Smith	Ossoff	Thune
Johnson	Paul	Tillis
Kaine	Portman	Toomey
Kelly	Risch	Tuberville
Kennedy	Romney	Warnock
Lankford	Rounds	Wicker
Lee	Rubio	Young
Lummis	Sasse	

NAYS—45

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	King	Schatz
Brown	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cantwell	Leahy	Shaheen
Cardin	Lujan	Sinema
Carper	Manchin	Smith
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Feinstein	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Graham Inhofe

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 45.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2233) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2478

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the Cardin amendment No. 2478.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of amendment No. 2478, which would make permanent and expand the Minority Business Development Agency, or the MBDA, which is the only Federal Agency to focus exclusively on the needs of minority businesses.

This amendment is based on the Minority Business Resiliency Act, which I introduced in April, and the language is identical to what was passed out of the Commerce Committee earlier today by a voice vote.

I want to thank Senator WICKER and Senator CANTWELL of the committee for their help in getting this to the floor. I also want to thank Senator TIM SCOTT, Senator CORNYN, and Senator BALDWIN, who were also cosponsors of this amendment, for helping us reach this moment.

This amendment will give the Agency the resources and leadership necessary to help underserved entrepreneurs overcome historical barriers to small business ownership, innovate and start and grow successful businesses, and create jobs.

This Agency will also partner with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other minority-serving institutions to reach rural minority business enterprises and create a regional network supporting entrepreneurial education and help to coordinate Federal resources in service of minority business enterprises.

Last year, the MBDA programs and services helped minority businesses secure nearly \$8 billion in contracts and capital, and created nearly 12,000 jobs.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from 17 stakeholders in support of this amendment, which includes the Small Business Majority, U.S. Black Chamber, and U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AUGUST 4, 2021.

Hon. CHUCK SCHUMER,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER SCHUMER AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: We write you in strong support of Amendment #2478, which would codify the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) at the Department of Commerce. As the leaders in the small business and minority business communities, we hope our unified support represented by the signatures below will urge your fellow Senators to include this language in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. We urge you to support this Amendment.

The link between infrastructure, revitalized manufacturing, and technical assistance to the minority entrepreneur community cannot be overstated, and we strongly encourage building a strong national support system through MBDA to ensure minority participation in infrastructure investment.

This amendment, which is based on the bipartisan Minority Business Development Act of 2021, will support the expansion of Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBEs) and bolster the country's economy. Moreover, it will ensure that the infrastructure investments made in the legislation can utilize and support America's minority-owned businesses.

Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, MBEs consisted of 30 percent of the country's 28.6 million small businesses, contributed nearly \$1.5 trillion in annual gross receipts and employed over 7.2 million Americans. Despite these significant figures, MBEs stand disproportionately disadvantaged as evidenced by challenges with access to capital and collateral, lower credit scores, and less access to technical assistance services.

Created under President Nixon by executive order, the MBDA has been a significant resource in reducing market and capital access challenges while growing the number of MBEs. In 2020 alone, the MBDA assisted MBES in attaining over \$7.8 billion in contracts and capital, with 10% of contracts made in the manufacturing sector and another 15% made in the utility and construction sector. Overall, the MBDA assisted MBEs at the height of the pandemic to retain or create over 27,000 jobs.

Despite MBDA's progress, the pandemic's economic downturn has amplified the need to invest in services for underserved and minority small business owners—particularly those within Women, People of Color, and Tribal markets. MBEs overwhelmingly are concentrated in industries that remain susceptible to economic disruption, such as personal and laundry services, and retail. As the nation experiences a resurgence of Coronavirus cases, these fragile markets face near-fatal consequences.

We urge lawmakers to support this amendment as it will strengthen and establish the MBDA into federal statute. This critical bipartisan proposal, introduced by Senators

Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tim Scott, (R-SC), Roger Wicker (R-MS), and Maria Cantwell (D-WA) would increase MBDA's fiscal year 2021 budget to further safeguard MBEs from the devastating inequities brought on by the health crisis and promote a diverse entrepreneurial pipeline by establishing a process for the Minority Business Development Center Program to expand its regional coverage to reach MBEs in rural areas.

During this time of economic emergency, we believe now is the time for Congress to pass equitable and targeted legislation that will benefit underserved and rural markets and encourage underserved and rural markets enterprise formation. This amendment achieves that while strengthening the infrastructure package more broadly.

We commend your work on ensuring that all small businesses receive the resources necessary to withstand the current economic downturn, as well as grow now and into the future. We urge you to reach out directly to John Stanford (js@prismgroup.global) with any questions or comments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC), Asian/Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce & Entrepreneurship (National ACE), Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO), Association of Women's Business Centers (AWBC), Gusto, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), National Association of Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB), NextGen Chamber of Commerce, Pacific Community Ventures, Page 30 Coalition.

Prosperity Now, Small Business Majority, Small Business Roundtable, US Black Chambers, Inc., US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce, Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP).

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I understand that we may be able to do this by a voice vote, so I would ask unanimous consent that after my colleagues have had a chance to speak, we can vitiate the 60-vote requirement.

With that, I yield to my colleague from Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I do appreciate the Senator from Maryland joining on this. Everything he said about the committee action today in the Commerce Committee is exactly correct. I subscribe to every statement that he made. I couldn't improve on it. I urge a "yes" vote, and I am indeed hopeful we can vitiate the rollcall vote and save some time by voicing this one.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. We have cleared this with both the Democrats and the Republicans for managing the bill, and I would ask unanimous consent to vitiate the 60-vote requirement on the Cardin-Wicker amendment No. 2478.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2478

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment No. 2478.

The amendment (No. 2478) is agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2449

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to Daines amendment No. 2449.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, there is funding in this bill for a complex program that would lead to very few actual forest projects, and I fear it will only function as a shell for programs like the Climate Conservation Corps.

And to be good stewards of our forests, we need to be good stewards of our limited resources. This amendment does that by redirecting these funds to higher priority accounts, like Good Neighbor Authority and post-fire treatment.

Good Neighbor Authority has routinely enjoyed very bipartisan support in this body and has proven to be one of the most effective forestry tools. Given recent past and present wildfire seasons, redirecting funds to post-fire treatment just makes sense.

It is early August, and Montana is on fire. There are nearly 300,000 acres burning across our State. We need to manage our forests before they manage us. And in order to do so, we need to invest in higher priority accounts, and my amendment would do just that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise in opposition to the amendment, and I will explain my reasons.

Senator DAINES' amendment seeks to alter the funding levels of provisions in the Energy Infrastructure Act as reported out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Specifically, the amendment cuts funding for hiring veterans and Native youth to do fire prevention projects and directs that funding to postfire rehabilitation projects and to States that carry out projects on Federal land.

We are supportive of both postfire projects and States doing work on Federal land. That is why we funded these programs at unprecedented levels in our bill. However, we also support funding for veterans and Native youth. So I do not believe it is appropriate to cut the funding for this program.

So I urge my colleagues to please vote no on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, we have had two votes in this tranche; first vote about 50 minutes from start to close and the second vote about 25 minutes.

We are going to propound a unanimous consent request—and I am tempted to do it right now—to try to figure out what would be reasonable. My sense is that maybe 15 minutes would be reasonable but a real 15 minutes, and we will start with that.

Mr. WICKER. Hear! Hear!

Mr. CARPER. Any objection?

A SENATOR. Without objection.

Mr. CARPER. All right. Madam President, I would ask that we make it a 15-minute vote, a real 15-minute vote. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2449

Is there further debate?

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 303 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	Lankford	Shelby
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Thune
Cramer	Marshall	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Tuberville
Daines	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young

NAYS—50

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NOT VOTING—2

Graham Inhofe

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 50.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to. The amendment (No. 2449) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 327

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, our Nation is nearly \$30 trillion in debt. That is \$233,000 in debt for every American family.

The American people are already feeling the pressure of rising inflation thanks to reckless government spending. And, make no mistake about it, inflation is a tax, a tax that hurts our

families on low and fixed incomes the most.

I am hearing it from families across Florida who are worried. I heard from a dad in Jacksonville with three kids who is helping to temporarily take care of two other kids because their father is out of work. As a result of having five kids in his home, he has started working a second job to pay for all of the groceries that are rapidly increasing in price. His second job is driving Uber, and that is less and less profitable by the day because of the rising price of gas.

Over the weekend, the suspension on the Federal debt ceiling expired. That leaves Congress with two choices: Continue this reckless, wasteful spending with no accountability to the American people, or start making the tough choices to put our Nation on a successful path.

I know we can make the right choices and start moving America in a better direction. That is exactly what I did when I was Governor of Florida. Our State was on a bad path. I had to make difficult choices, but I paid down one-third of State debt, all while cutting taxes 100 times. It can be done.

Washington's choice to keep raising or suspending the debt ceiling is like raising the limit on your credit card, month after month, with absolutely no plan to pay it off. It is irresponsible, and it is no way to operate. You would never run your business or family the way Washington runs. It is wasteful and dysfunctional.

I came to Washington to rein in this exact type of dysfunction. We have to get our debt and spending under control. We need to make Washington work for families in Florida and all across the Nation. That is why I am leading my colleagues in a proposed rule change that would require every piece of legislation passed by a Senate committee to include a report on how it will impact inflation.

It is very simple. When legislation, directly or indirectly, raises the cost of living or raises taxes on American families, families deserve to know.

Too many in Washington believe the lie that inflation is impossible, debt doesn't matter, and spending has no consequences. That is why this rule change is needed.

This rule change is to protect that father in Jacksonville who is struggling to get by. It is to protect those living on fixed incomes, low-income earners, and small businesses that can't absorb cost increases.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 327. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the unanimous consent request from the Senator of Florida.

The amendment before us would change the Standing Rules of the Senate and require additional reporting requirements regarding inflation, a change which would substantially increase the administrative burden on committees and staff and the process on the floor.

We already have significant tools at our disposal to evaluate economic indicators. We have economists at the Department of Labor, Treasury Department, Congressional Budget Office, Federal Reserve, and other Federal offices regularly consulting with Congress on issues about inflation and other economic indicators. This is totally unnecessary.

For these reasons, I oppose this resolution and the request for unanimous consent. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

AMENDMENT NO. 2338

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, while I am disappointed that my colleague won't accept this measure, we do need to start doing something about inflation, and we can do that today with the infrastructure spending bill.

We can all get behind real infrastructure—like roads, bridges, airports, and seaports—but we have to acknowledge that \$1.2 trillion is a massive amount of taxpayer dollars, and we have to know exactly how this will impact families.

I have been told by supporters of this infrastructure bill that it will not cause inflation. I will not support anything that increases inflation on American families. I have an amendment to the infrastructure package that will require the Congressional Budget Office to certify that the spending in this bill will not increase inflation on the American people.

If CBO does not certify that the spending authorized and appropriated in the bill would not increase inflation, my amendment would prohibit the funding from being obligated or spent, and the funds would instead be transferred to the Treasury Department for deficit reduction.

I hope that everybody will get behind this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there time in opposition?

Mr. DURBIN. I yield back my time.

Mr. CARPER. Yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is yielded back.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2338

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 304 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NAYS—55

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Blunt	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Cassidy	Markey	Tester
Collins	Menendez	Van Hollen
Coons	Merkley	Warner
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Ossoff	
Gillibrand	Padilla	
Hassan	Peters	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Inhofe	Rounds
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 45.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2338) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, Senator CAPITO and I have a couple of comments we would like to offer before we start on this amendment with Senator LEE, and that is we have consulted with both leaders, with Senator SCHUMER and Senator MCCONNELL. They are in agreement that 15 minutes firm is the vote.

So when we start this vote, folks have 15 minutes to get here after we start the vote to vote, and if they are not here, they are too late.

So that is the idea. We have spent way too much time waiting for people. We have three amendments lined up, and we are going to vote them and be punctual.

Senator CAPITO.

Mrs. CAPITO. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am in full support of using the 15-minute deadline that we have anyway and actually enforcing this.

There is a lot of interest in this bill, as there should be. There are a lot of amendments pending. We want to get as many Members in—and have their amendments in the queue—as we possibly can.

But if people don't come down and vote and show courtesy to everybody, I said in my last statement we are going to go to punitive measures. I am not sure voting within the allotted time is really a punitive measure, but that is what we are aiming for, and I am fully supportive of that.

Mr. CARPER. Thank you.

I would just ask any staff and Members who are watching, staff, let your Senators know it is 15 minutes, and that is it.

AMENDMENT NOS. 2279 AND 2358 TO AMENDMENT NO 2137

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up to the substitute and be reported by number: No. 1 is Lee No. 2279; No. 2 is Rosen No. 2358; further, that the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no amendments in order to the amendments prior to a vote in relation to the amendments, with 60 affirmative votes required for the adoption of the Lee amendment listed and with up to 4 minutes, equally divided, prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2279 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

(Purpose: To establish a project delivery program under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 for water storage infrastructure projects.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. LEE, proposes an amendment numbered 2279 to the amendment No. 2137.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of August 2, 2021 under "Text of Amendments.")

AMENDMENT NO. 2358 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Ms. ROSEN, proposes an amendment numbered 2358 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To modify a provision relating to providing support for activities to increase the resiliency of the National Highway System to mitigate the cost of damages from wildfires)

On page 60, line 22, insert "wildfires," after "flooding,".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, in reference to my amendment No. 2279, this is what we are trying to deal with here.

In order to help expedite the review of projects that are subject to NEPA, Congress authorized in the FAST Act for States to assume the duties of conducting the NEPA analysis.

For example, the Federal Highway Administration has entered into agreements with seven States—including Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Ohio, Texas, and Utah—to assume this responsibility with great success, providing an opportunity for States to leverage their unique understanding of their own States in order to better carry out NEPA's requirements.

To build on this success, Congress should look to expand the ability of States to partner with the Federal Government for these types of reviews in their States' water infrastructure projects.

My amendment would require the Department of the Interior to set up a program similar to the existing Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program so that any State may voluntarily assume the Agency's NEPA responsibilities for their water storage infrastructure projects.

As I said just a moment ago, States already have a history of successfully conducting this work in the transportation space.

In 2020, for example, California conducted 33 environmental assessments, 32 findings of no significant impact, 2 environmental impact statements, 3 records of decision, and the list goes on and on.

In just the last half of 2020 alone, Arizona conducted over 50 categorical exclusion analyses. These are clearly roles that States are able and excited to handle.

In fulfilling these responsibilities, States would be subject to the same rigorous environmental requirements as their Federal partners, employing the very same standards. Just as projects led by Federal Agencies can be halted due to insufficient NEPA analysis, States would also be held to the same standard.

With much of the West experiencing severe drought, with dire consequences, allowing States to aid the Federal Government in NEPA review in order to expedite water storage infrastructure projects is not just common sense, it is a necessity. It is a matter of survival.

I urge my colleagues to support amendment No. 2279.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by our colleague from Utah.

This amendment would undermine the National Environmental Policy Act, also known as NEPA, by allowing States to assume responsibility for undertaking complex reviews of Federal action. These are reviews that Congress vested explicitly in the Federal Agencies that permit or license projects that could adversely affect our environment.

NEPA is designed to ensure that Federal Agencies consider major actions carefully to ensure those decisions do not unduly impact water quality, endangered species, community well-being, air quality, and other environmental resources.

NEPA is a critical analytical tool that ensures that Federal decision makers are better informed and that the affected community has an opportunity to engage and be heard.

Today, as the world is in the midst of a sixth great extinction event, and climate change is having ever greater impacts on our natural world, we should be making decisions more carefully than ever, not just to improve outcomes but also to avoid wasting money on projects that are not resilient to withstand climate change.

This amendment would instead turn over responsibility for that critical analysis to the States.

The bill before us includes many environmental deregulatory provisions—more, in fact, than many of us would prefer. However, it has been drafted in the spirit of bipartisan compromise.

This bill, as drafted, includes provisions to set deadlines for project review schedule in order to reduce project review timelines. It provides or expands categorical exclusions from NEPA. It also permanently authorizes the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council.

Unlike these provisions, which were the product of committee deliberation and compromise, the amendment that our friend from Utah has offered would significantly alter the process for Federal environmental review without any committee deliberation on such major changes.

These sweeping changes are inappropriate and unwarranted, and I urge our colleagues to join me in voting no.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that for an additional 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, it is important to remember these are the exact same standards that would apply. We do this all the time in other areas. Federal regulatory Agencies, on a continual basis, with the blessing of Congress, are given authority to carry out a Federal program.

In fact, we already do this with NEPA in the context of the Federal Highway Administration.

This works. States are competent. It is a matter of expanding the human resources to which we have access.

These are the exact same standards. There is no environmental threat. This would just allow this stuff to get done faster.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2279

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2279.

Mr. LEE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 47, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 305 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rounds
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lankford	Shelby
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Thune
Cramer	Marshall	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Tuberville
Daines	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Fischer	Portman	

NAYS—50

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Wyden
Hassan	Padilla	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Inhofe	Sanders
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The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for adoption, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2279) was rejected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: How long did that last 15-minute vote take?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. While the vote was scheduled for 15 minutes, it took 37.

Mr. CARPER. Would the Senator yield?

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following rollcall votes be 10 minutes in length.

Mr. CARPER. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The objection is heard.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, let me just take a minute from Senator CAPITO to explain what is going on. OK?

So lined up right now, we are going to do three voice votes. Negotiations are going forward on an amendment from Senator SCHUMER, related to the Commerce Committee's jurisdiction. And after that, I think the last vote will be that of Senator FISCHER, and we will be done.

And the reason why that is delayed is in order to provide time for negotiation to occur on the Schumer amendment

with the Commerce Committee, and I think we are just about resolved.

I don't like it. It is what it is.

I just want to thank all for your patience. We are close to the end.

I would just ask, when we ask for a voice vote on the amendment from Senator JACKY ROSEN, that we get a voice vote. And I would ask that when we ask for a voice vote on the Carper-Inhofe amendment, we get a voice vote. And beyond that, we will be halfway home, halfway home.

So thank you for your patience. We are almost there.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to—

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, let me have order. Let me have order, please.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Order.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up to the substitute and be reported by number: Carper-Inhofe 2564, Bennet-Hoeven 2548; further, that the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no amendments in order to the amendments prior to voting in relation to the amendments, with up to 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2564 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for himself and others, proposes an amendment numbered 2564 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To improve provisions relating to appropriations for the Corps of Engineers)

On page 2486, line 14, strike "Provided" and all that follows through "proviso:" on line 21 and insert the following: "Provided further, That of the amount provided under this heading in this Act, \$2,500,000,000 shall be for construction, replacement, rehabilitation, and expansion of inland waterways projects: *Provided further*, That section 102(a) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662; 33 U.S.C. 2212(a)) and section 109 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-260; 134 Stat. 2624) shall not apply to the extent that such projects are carried out using funds provided in the preceding proviso: *Provided further*, That in using such funds referred to in the preceding proviso, the Secretary shall give priority to projects included in the Capital Investment Strategy of the Corps of Engineers."

On page 2487, lines 9 through 11, strike "or section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662; 33 U.S.C. 2309a)," and insert "section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662; 33 U.S.C. 2309a), or section 165(a) of division AA of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260)."

On page 2489, line 9, insert "Provided further, That in selecting projects under the previous proviso, the Secretary of the Army shall prioritize projects with overriding life-

safety benefits: *Provided further*, That of the funds in the proviso preceding the preceding proviso, the Secretary of the Army shall, to the maximum extent practicable, prioritize projects in the work plan that directly benefit economically disadvantaged communities, and may take into consideration prioritizing projects that benefit areas in which the percentage of people that live in poverty or identify as belonging to a minority group is greater than the average such percentage in the United States, based on data from the Bureau of the Census:" after "purpose:".

On page 2496, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

GENERAL PROVISIONS—CORPS OF ENGINEERS

SEC. 300. For projects that are carried out with funds under this heading, the Secretary of the Army and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall consider other factors in addition to the benefit-cost ratio when determining the economic benefits of projects that benefit disadvantaged communities.

AMENDMENT NO. 2548 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. BENNET and Mr. HOEVEN, proposes an amendment numbered 2548 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program)

At the end of title VIII of division D, add the following:

SEC. 408. JOINT CHIEFS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CHIEFS.—The term "Chiefs" means the Chief of the Forest Service and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(2) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY.—The term "eligible activity" means an activity—

(A) to reduce the risk of wildfire;

(B) to protect water quality and supply; or

(C) to improve wildlife habitat for at-risk species.

(3) PROGRAM.—The term "Program" means the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program established under subsection (b)(1).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(5) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term "wildland-urban interface" has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership program to improve the health and resilience of forest landscapes across National Forest System land and State, Tribal, and private land.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall administer the Program by coordinating eligible activities conducted on National Forest System land and State, Tribal, or private land across a forest landscape to improve the health and resilience of the forest landscape by—

(A) assisting producers and landowners in implementing eligible activities on eligible private or Tribal land using the applicable programs and authorities administered by the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service under title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.), not including the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of that title (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.); and

(B) conducting eligible activities on National Forest System land or assisting landowners in implementing eligible activities on State, Tribal, or private land using the applicable programs and authorities administered by the Chief of the Forest Service.

(C) SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—The appropriate Regional Forester and State Conservationist shall jointly submit to the Chiefs on an annual basis proposals for eligible activities under the Program.

(d) EVALUATION CRITERIA.—In evaluating and selecting proposals submitted under subsection (c), the Chiefs shall consider—

(1) criteria including whether the proposal—

(A) reduces wildfire risk in a municipal watershed or the wildland-urban interface;

(B) was developed through a collaborative process with participation from diverse stakeholders;

(C) increases forest workforce capacity or forest business infrastructure and development;

(D) leverages existing authorities and non-Federal funding;

(E) provides measurable outcomes; or

(F) supports established State and regional priorities; and

(2) such other criteria relating to the merits of the proposals as the Chiefs determine to be appropriate.

(e) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall provide—

(1) public notice on the websites of the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service describing—

(A) the solicitation of proposals under subsection (c); and

(B) the criteria for selecting proposals in accordance with subsection (d); and

(2) information relating to the Program and activities funded under the Program to States, Indian Tribes, units of local government, and private landowners.

(f) EXCLUSIONS.—An eligible activity may not be carried out under the Program—

(1) in a wilderness area or designated wilderness study area;

(2) in an inventoried roadless area;

(3) on any Federal land on which, by Act of Congress or Presidential proclamation, the removal of vegetation is restricted or prohibited; or

(4) in an area in which the eligible activity would be inconsistent with the applicable land and resource management plan.

(g) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report providing recommendations to Congress relating to the Program, including a review of—

(A) funding mechanisms for the Program;

(B) staff capacity to carry out the Program;

(C) privacy laws applicable to the Program;

(D) data collection under the Program;

(E) monitoring and outcomes under the Program; and

(F) such other matters as the Secretary considers to be appropriate.

(2) ADDITIONAL REPORTS.—For each of fiscal years 2022 and 2023, the Chiefs shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report describing projects for which funding is provided under the Program, including the status and outcomes of those projects.

(h) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out the Program

\$90,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

(2) ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—In addition to the funds described in paragraph (1), the Secretary may obligate available funds from accounts used to carry out the existing Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership prior to the date of enactment of this Act to carry out the Program.

(3) DURATION OF AVAILABILITY.—Funds made available under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.

(4) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—Of the funds made available under paragraph (1)—

(A) not less than 40 percent shall be allocated to carry out eligible activities through the Natural Resources Conservation Service;

(B) not less than 40 percent shall be allocated to carry out eligible activities through the Forest Service; and

(C) the remaining funds shall be allocated by the Chiefs to the Natural Resources Conservation Service or the Forest Service—

(i) to carry out eligible activities; or

(ii) for other purposes, such as technical assistance, project development, or local capacity building.

AMENDMENT NO. 2358

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be 4 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to the Rosen amendment No. 2358.

The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, last summer, the United States saw up close the horrific damage that wildfires can do to our communities. In 2020, nearly 300,000 acres in Nevada burned to the ground. Right now, the Tamarack fire is devastating the Nevada-California border and local communities.

These natural disasters have done real, lasting damage to our Nation's highways, causing cracks, potholes, and, in some cases, literally melting the roads that we drive on.

My colleague Senator Risch and I offer this bipartisan amendment to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which would add wildfires as a specified damage for which Federal assistance from the National Highway Performance Program may be used to rebuild our highways.

This will provide support to increase the resiliency of the national highway system, helping to mitigate the cost of the damages.

I ask all of my colleagues to support this amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there further debate?

Mr. CARPER. I rise in support of this amendment. I hope we will get everybody to vote for it. Let's do a voice vote so we can move on.

Mrs. CAPITO. I am in support also as a ranking member.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2358

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Hearing no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2358) was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Delaware.

AMENDMENT NO. 2447

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise now to discuss my amendment with

Senators INHOFE, WICKER, and DUCKWORTH.

This amendment makes several changes to the appropriations section of the substitute in the section that funds the Army Corps of Engineers.

In WRDA 2020, Senator BARRASSO and I heard multiple times about the struggles of small, rural, and economically disadvantaged communities in meeting project cost shares. These projects range from aquatic ecosystem restorations to flood control and new levees. Yet because the Corps is required to cost share the work, these small, rural, and poor communities never get the assistance they need.

Last year, Senator BARRASSO and I created a cap authority that allows the Corps to pay for full expense of these projects to help these disadvantaged communities finance the infrastructure the community needs.

This amendment also makes clarifying changes to the inland waterways funding. In addition to a technical correction, it makes clear that the funding provided in this act must be prioritized for projects on the Capital Investment Strategy Report, the guiding document for the Corps inland waterways projects.

Finally, this amendment makes sure that inland flooding projects are prioritized for economically disadvantaged communities and life-safety-related projects. This supports equity for disadvantaged communities while prioritizing projects with the highest need.

This is a good bill. It is a good amendment, and these small tweaks make it stronger.

I urge my colleagues to support our amendment and hope that we might do so unanimously.

Senator INHOFE would be here. He is in Oklahoma with his family right now. I think some would understand that. He urges us to support this as well.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there further debate?

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2564

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the amendment No. 2564.

The amendment (No. 2564) was agreed to.

Mr. CARPER. With that, Mr. President, I would suggest the absence of a quorum, waiting for the arrival of Senator BENNET, who will be here momentarily.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to Bennet-Hoeven amendment 2548.

AMENDMENT NO. 2548

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to speak about Bennet-Hoeven amendment 2548.

Our amendment would formally establish the Joint Chiefs Program at USDA. I know a lot of people haven't heard of this initiative, but it is really, really important.

As I have said on this floor before, in Western States like Colorado and North Dakota, our forests and our grasslands are as important to our economy as the Lincoln Tunnel or the Brooklyn Bridge are to New York, but they haven't received nearly enough investment over the years. The result is that we have people on the ground across the West who are working with incredibly constrained resources. But, despite their best effort, there is a lot of important work to maintain the health of our forests and grasslands that they are unable to do. The consequences of this have been terrible in the West.

In Colorado, we had the three largest wildfires in our history last year. The fires were still burning when the snow fell, for the first time. That has never happened in anyone's memory.

As we consider this infrastructure bill tonight, one of the major east-west corridors in America is closed because of mudslides that poured down the burn scar from the wildfires last year. Now I-70 may be closed for weeks.

We need to deal with this on the front end, and that is why the Joint Chiefs Program matters. At USDA, the Forest Service works mostly on public lands, while the Natural Resources Conservation Service supports efforts on private lands. Joint Chiefs allows them to work in a collaborative way.

I thank Senator HOEVEN for his support, and I hope we will vote for this on voice vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with the Senator from Colorado on this Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership Act. I appreciate his leadership.

There are several points I want to make here before we vote, and that is, this program is very popular with landowners, and I think that is important. This is a very popular program with landowners. It is completely voluntary, a voluntary program. We have chatted with CBO. It does not score, so it does not have a score. Again, both the majority and minority on Ag agree and support this legislation. So, again, it is farmer-friendly, rancher-friendly, and popular with landowners.

I thank the Senator from Colorado, and I urge a "yes" vote on this amendment.

Thank you, Mr. President.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2548

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2548) was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Delaware.

AMENDMENT NOS. 2164 AND 2570 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, colleagues, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be called up to the substitute and be reported by number. The first of those is Fischer, 2164, with Cortez Masto—is that correct? Yes—and the second is Schumer, 2570; further, that the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no amendments in order to the amendments prior to a vote in relation to the amendments, with up to 2 minutes equally divided prior to each vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2164 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mrs. FISCHER, proposes an amendment numbered 2164 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To promote transparency by requiring the establishment of an online interactive map displaying the location of broadband deployment projects that are funded by the Federal Government)

At the appropriate place in division F, insert the following:

SEC. 60. BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT LOCATIONS MAP.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term "broadband infrastructure" means any cables, fiber optics, wiring, or other permanent (integral to the structure) infrastructure, including wireless infrastructure, that—

(A) is capable of providing access to internet connections in individual locations; and

(B) is an advanced telecommunications capability, as defined in section 706(d) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (47 U.S.C. 1302(d)).

(2) COMMISSION.—The term "Commission" means the Federal Communications Commission.

(3) DEPLOYMENT LOCATIONS MAP.—The term "Deployment Locations Map" means the mapping tool required to be established under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPLOYMENT LOCATIONS MAP.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall, in consultation with all relevant Federal agencies, establish an online mapping tool to provide a locations overview of the overall geographic footprint of each broadband infrastructure deployment project funded by the Federal Government.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—The Deployment Locations Map shall be—

(1) the centralized, authoritative source of information on funding made available by the Federal Government for broadband infrastructure deployment in the United States; and

(2) made publicly available on the website of the Commission.

(d) FUNCTIONS.—In establishing the Deployment Locations Map, the Commission shall ensure that the Deployment Locations Map—

(1) compiles data related to Federal funding for broadband infrastructure deployment provided by the Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Ad-

ministration, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, and any other Federal agency that provides such data relating to broadband infrastructure deployment funding to the Commission, including funding under—

(A) this Act;

(B) the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (Public Law 116-136);

(C) the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260);

(D) American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-2); or

(E) any Federal amounts appropriated or any Federal program authorized after the date of enactment of this Act to fund broadband infrastructure deployment;

(2) contains data, with respect to each broadband infrastructure deployment program, relating to—

(A) the Federal agency of jurisdiction;

(B) the program title; and

(C) the network type, including wired, terrestrial fixed, wireless, mobile, and satellite broadband infrastructure deployment;

(3) allows users to manipulate the Deployment Locations Map to identify, search, and filter broadband infrastructure deployment projects by—

(A) company name;

(B) duration timeline, including the dates of a project's beginning and ending, or anticipated beginning or ending date;

(C) total number of locations to which a project makes service available; and

(D) relevant download and upload speeds; and

(4) incorporates broadband service availability data as depicted in the Broadband Map created under section 802(c)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 642(c)(1)).

(e) PERIODIC UPDATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall, in consultation with relevant Federal agencies, ensure the Deployment Locations Map is maintained and up to date on a periodic basis, but not less frequently than once every 180 days.

(2) OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Each Federal agency providing funding for broadband infrastructure deployment shall report relevant data to the Commission on a periodic basis.

(f) NO EFFECT ON PROGRAMMATIC MISSIONS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the programmatic missions of Federal agencies providing funding for broadband infrastructure development.

(g) NONDUPLICATION.—The requirements in this section shall be consistent with and avoid duplication with the provisions of section 903 of division FF of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260).

(h) FUNDING.—Of the amounts appropriated to carry out this division under this Act, \$10,000,000 shall be made available to carry out this section.

AMENDMENT NO. 2570 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2137

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. CARPER], for Mr. SCHUMER, proposes an amendment numbered 2570 to amendment No. 2137.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish safety standards for certain limousines)

At the appropriate place in division B, insert the following:

SEC. . LIMOUSINE COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) LIMOUSINE STANDARDS.—

(1) SAFETY BELT AND SEATING SYSTEM STANDARDS FOR LIMOUSINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe a final rule that—

(A) amends Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Numbers 208, 209, and 210 to require to be installed in limousines on each designated seating position, including on side-facing seats—

(i) an occupant restraint system consisting of integrated lap-shoulder belts; or

(ii) an occupant restraint system consisting of a lap belt, if an occupant restraint system described in clause (i) does not meet the need for motor vehicle safety; and

(B) amends Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Number 207 to require limousines to meet standards for seats (including side-facing seats), seat attachment assemblies, and seat installation to minimize the possibility of failure by forces acting on the seats, attachment assemblies, and installations as a result of motor vehicle impact.

(2) REPORT ON RETROFIT ASSESSMENT FOR LIMOUSINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report that assesses the feasibility, benefits, and costs with respect to the application of any requirement established under paragraph (1) to a limousine introduced into interstate commerce before the date on which the requirement takes effect.

(b) MODIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN VEHICLES.—The final rule prescribed under subsection (a)(1) and any standards prescribed under subsection (b) or (c) of section 23015 shall apply to a person modifying a passenger motor vehicle (as defined in section 32101 of title 49, United States Code) that has already been purchased by the first purchaser (as defined in section 30102(b) of that title) by increasing the wheelbase of the vehicle to make the vehicle a limousine.

(c) APPLICATION.—The requirements of this section apply notwithstanding section 30112(b)(1) of title 49, United States Code.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the Fischer amendment, No. 2164.

The Senator from Nebraska.

AMENDMENT NO. 2164

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I thank Senator CARPER and Senator CAPITO for the work they have been doing here on the floor. I appreciate their diligence in trying to get amendments up.

I am glad to offer this bipartisan amendment with my colleague from Nevada. It would promote transparency among all Federal funding avenues for broadband infrastructure deployment.

Right now, funding is divided among several Agencies: FCC, NTIA, USDA, HHS, Treasury, and many others. Some of these programs have detailed maps of where funding is going, but some do not. Even when there are maps, it still requires searching through several web pages and sources to find out what you are looking for, if you can find it at all.

Without a clear picture of where the funding is going, it will be increasingly difficult to avoid duplication and distribute resources where they are needed the most. So our amendment would

create an online mapping tool through an interagency process so we can view the latest progress of all of these deployment projects in one place. I would urge adoption of the amendment.

Thank you.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I join my colleague from Nebraska in support of this bipartisan amendment.

Transparency around broadband is so important for all of our communities, and it fits with, I think, what we are all doing to address our broadband needs across the country and trying to ensure we are bringing broadband into the communities most in need. So I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I understand there has been a request—let me ask the Senator.

I understand there has been a request for a recorded vote. Can you confirm that or not?

Mrs. FISCHER. A recorded vote would be fine.

Mr. CARPER. All right. Then it will be a recorded vote.

Let me ask our colleagues: 10 minutes; is that OK? Ten minutes from start to finish, and that is it. And the last amendment will be Schumer. All right? Let's do this in 10 minutes, OK?

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2164

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. THUNE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 306 Leg.]

YEAS—95

Baldwin	Cotton	Johnson
Barrasso	Cramer	Kaine
Bennet	Crapo	Kelly
Blackburn	Cruz	Kennedy
Blumenthal	Daines	King
Booker	Duckworth	Klobuchar
Boozman	Durbin	Lankford
Braun	Ernst	Leahy
Brown	Feinstein	Lee
Burr	Fischer	Lujan
Cantwell	Gillibrand	Lummis
Capito	Grassley	Manchin
Cardin	Hagerty	Markey
Carper	Hassan	Marshall
Casey	Hawley	McConnell
Cassidy	Heinrich	Merkley
Collins	Hickenlooper	Moran
Coons	Hirono	Murkowski
Cornyn	Hoeven	Murphy
Cortez Masto	Hyde-Smith	Murray

Ossoff	Sasse	Thune
Padilla	Schatz	Tillis
Paul	Schumer	Tuberville
Peters	Scott (FL)	Van Hollen
Portman	Scott (SC)	Warner
Reed	Shaheen	Warnock
Risch	Shelby	Warren
Romney	Sinema	Whitehouse
Rosen	Smith	Wicker
Rounds	Stabenow	Wyden
Rubio	Sullivan	Young
Sanders	Tester	

NOT VOTING—5

Blunt	Inhofe	Toomey
Graham	Menendez	

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. On this vote, the yeas are 95, the nays are 0.

The amendment (No. 2164) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2570

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the vote in relation to the Schumer amendment, No. 2570.

The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment. It is a bipartisan amendment with Senator WICKER. And this is about just giving basic safety regulations to those superlong, stretch limousines.

The reason why Senator SCHUMER and I care about this, there was a horrible, horrible incident in Upstate New York, in Schoharie, where 20 people were killed. In that 1 limousine, 17 passengers: 4 young women from the same family—a mom lost 4 daughters—and 2 recently married couples. They hired the limousine to go safely to a birthday party.

This cannot continue.

And I yield to Senator WICKER.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I, too, rise in support of this amendment. It is in response to a tragic automobile accident that affected a number of families.

I want to thank Senator SCHUMER's staff for working with me, the ranking member, and the chair of the Commerce Committee to get this language correct. It is in good shape. I entirely agree with the junior Senator from New York.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2570

Mr. CORNYN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE).

The result was announced—yeas 58, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 307 Legislative]

YEAS—58

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rubio
Booker	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Burr	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Capito	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Lujan	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Thune
Collins	Markey	Van Hollen
Coons	McConnell	Warner
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warnock
Cramer	Merkley	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wicker
Feinstein	Ossoff	Wyden
Gillibrand	Padilla	
Hassan	Peters	

NAYS—39

Barrasso	Hagerty	Risch
Blackburn	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hoeven	Rounds
Braun	Johnson	Sasse
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Shelby
Crapo	Lummis	Sullivan
Cruz	Marshall	Tester
Daines	Moran	Tillis
Ernst	Murkowski	Toomey
Fischer	Paul	Tuberville
Grassley	Portman	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Blunt	Graham	Inhofe
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The amendment (No. 2570) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I close, I have some brief remarks.

First, on the bill that just passed, let me thank my colleagues for passing this very important bill.

It stems from the fact that, in 2018, 20 lives were lost in a tragic limousine accident in Schoharie, NY. The families came from the small city of Amsterdam, the people. They had done just the right thing. It is a group that went out. They knew they might be enjoying themselves, and so they hired a big, long stretch limo. Unfortunately, as the limo came down the hill in Schoharie, it crashed, and 20 people died.

I met the families. These were young people in the prime of life. I met one mom. She lost four daughters—four daughters—in this crash. This community of Amsterdam and these families have endured endless tragedy.

But instead of cursing the darkness, they have lit a candle, and they are pushing for the fact that there is a hole in regulation. We regulate trucks, and we regulate smaller limos, but when it is a large limo, and they are not sure what it is classified as, then there is virtually no regulation. This legislation fills that hole. The accident was preventable.

There was another accident on Long Island—four young women in the prime of life killed in the same way. That was preventable.

Now Congress finally has the opportunity to address the gaps and loopholes that have allowed limousines to escape the basic safety standards that cover other vehicles.

My amendment—and that with Senator GILLIBRAND—would ensure that limousines meet minimum safety standards. It mandates seatbelts and seat safety standards, and it will save lives. So I thank my colleagues for supporting this amendment.

It is a beautiful thing what these families are doing. The hole in their heart will never go away. The hole in the heart of the whole city of Amsterdam, which lost so many of their vital young men and women, will never go away. But instead of cursing the darkness, they are lighting the candle, and, tonight, the candle was lit thanks to the bipartisan cooperation we have here. So I thank my colleagues.

H.R. 3684

Mr. President, now on the matter of today, the Senate is making really good progress, really good progress. As you know, I had promised, when we opened up our two-track process, that we would be fully bipartisan in the amendment process as we move forward on the bipartisan infrastructure bill. Well, I think no one can deny that we have kept our word here in the Democratic majority.

So far, the Senate has considered 22 amendments on this bipartisan piece of legislation, 15 of them today. That is more amendments than probably happened in many months when we were in the minority. Of those amendments, 12 have been agreed to—5 by voice vote, 7 by rollcall; 10 were not agreed to; 13 of those 22 amendments—more than half—were sponsored by Republicans. So, clearly, we have shown a willingness to allow Members who are not part of the bipartisan group to have input into this important bill.

Tomorrow, we will continue to consider amendments, and then, hopefully, we can bring this bill to a close in the very near future.

So the Chamber is working as Members on both sides of the aisle have wanted it to. I am proud of what we have been able to do today and hope we can continue tomorrow in that vein.

MORNING BUSINESS

TRIBUTE TO BILL CAMERON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, August 20 will be the end of an era in Chicago as WLS 890 AM political reporter Bill Cameron puts his microphone down after a 51-year career on the radio. Bill is the “Dean” of Chicago political reporters, joining the city hall beat in 1970 and covering all the major stories in Chicago since that time. The announcement of his pending retirement brought praise for Bill’s legendary career, with one colleague calling him a “walking encyclopedia of political knowledge.”

When asked by a fellow reporter how he had survived his first 50 years in the industry, Bill said he took inspiration in advice from Chicago Cubs legend Ernie Banks: “Find something you love

to do and stick with it.” Stick with it; he certainly did. Bill earned the admiration of his peers for his ability to elicit honest answers from his interview subjects. Bill always finds a way to cut to the heart of an issue and deliver insightful reports for his listeners.

Bill and I are both natives of East St. Louis, IL, though we never met until my Senate election and his Chicago beat brought us together. Bill’s father Fred was a successful high school football coach, winning more than 100 games for the storied East St. Louis Flyers. Instead of following his father’s footsteps into football, Bill chose broadcast journalism, earning a bachelor’s degree at Indiana University. And we are all the better for it.

Bill started as a news writer for NBC 5 in Chicago in 1969 but left TV for good the next year, signing on at the former WMAQ 670 AM. He was there until the station switched to an all-sports format in 2000, making the jump to WLS. Bill’s legendary career includes two Edward R. Murrow Awards, a Peabody Award, and countless other accolades. In addition to his day-to-day duties covering the city hall beat for WLS, Bill is the host of the station’s weekly public affairs show, “Connected to Chicago.”

Bill has covered numerous mayors, Governors—and even U.S. Senators—in his career. He has been there for election nights, policy press conferences, breaking news, and jury verdicts. He has seen it all in 50-plus years of broadcasting. So what does he want to see now in retirement? Bill says it is time to go see more National Parks.

Well, Bill, I hope you enjoy all the beauty that our National Parks have to offer you in retirement. I will miss your questions at press conferences and our lively discussions about the issues of the day on “Connected to Chicago.”

You certainly found something you loved and stuck with it, and you did it with class.

Enjoy your retirement.

AMENDMENT NO. 2478

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, if there had been a recorded vote on amendment No. 2478 to amendment No. 2137 to H.R. 3684, “To require the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce to promote and administer programs in the public and private sectors to assist the development of minority business enterprises and to ensure that such Agency has the necessary supporting resources, particularly during economic downturns,” I would have voted nay.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress